

IMOGEN MUSGRAVE.

A TALE OF THE OLD DOMINION.

BY CAROLINE ORNE.

Nor many years after the first settlement of Virginia, on the banks of a small river tributary to the James, stood a large, irregular mansion, its roof presenting various angles to the keen, and not unfrequently heavy winds that swept down from the mountains.

The proprietor was Mr. George Musgrave, and at the time this story commences he and his family were in the banqueting-room, gathered round the table which was plentifully furnished with substantial viands such as they had been accustomed to in England.

There were only three at the board besides Mr. Musgrave—his wife, Merton Wyatt, her son by a former marriage, and Imogen Musgrave, the only child of her father's first marriage.

Mrs. Musgrave, though a little rising forty, was still eminently handsome, and her manners were at times singularly fascinating, though she knew well when it suited her pleasure how to assume that cold, stately demeanor which checks any approach to familiarity, and chills the heart yearning for kindness and sympathy.

Her son inherited none of her beauty and talent, being heavy and ungainly in person, and of a dull and stolid intellect. Imogen, two years younger than Wyatt, was a creature of rare loveliness. Her eyes, which were almost always mistaken for black, were of the dark blue of those large violets which nestle the lowliest amid the dewy grass, and were shaded by long, jetty lashes. Her hair, though of the same dark hue in the shade, caught gleams of dusky gold from each glancing sunbeam, and was parted above her smooth, white forehead, whence it fell in a profusion of natural curls, heightening by their contrast the rich and varying damask that mantled her cheeks.

Mrs. Musgrave had early formed the plan of marrying her son to Imogen; a plan in which she had succeeded in gaining her husband's co-operation in spite of his daughter's repugnance. Imogen now seemed absent and thoughtful, a mood which was probably occasioned by the annexed note, which early in the morning had been put into her hands by a young girl, who had walked over two miles for the express purpose, though she pretended that she had called to inquire the way to a neighboring plantation.

"About an hour before sunset I shall be in the wood on the west side of the park. Meet me there, dear Imogen, that I may hear from your own lips, that the rumor which says you have consented to marry Wyatt is false. A single, long-drawn bugle note will announce to you the time of my arrival.

PERCIVAL WHARTON."

Before the family rose from the table, Mr. Musgrave filled a glass with claret which had long mellowed in the vaults of the old manor house in England before it

made its voyage to the New World, and passing it to his daughter, filled another for himself.

"Daughter," said he, "health and happiness be yours, unstinted in measure as this brimming glass of red wine, if you obey your mother's wishes and mine by renouncing Percival Wharton, and listening to the suit of our well beloved son; but if you set them at naught, then may your cup brim equally high with the bitter waters of pain, poverty and disaster, which should ever be the reward of filial disobedience."

As he pronounced the last word, a bugle note sweet, wild and clear, stole in at an open window that looked upon the park, and circling round the room gradually died away to the softest cadence, and then ceased. There was something dreamy and spirit-like in the sound, and with feelings slightly tinged with superstition they continued to listen, as if they expected to hear it repeated. All but Imogen, whose heart thrilled to the sound as if an arrow had pierced it; while the wine that filled the cup so high as to swell above its rim, fell in large drops upon her shaking hand. A few moments sufficed to enable her in part to subdue her agitation. She raised her bowed head, and with her left hand nervously swept back the tresses which nearly veiled her face. A golden chain which, for a year or more she had worn round her neck, being entangled with one of the longer ringlets, was by this sudden motion snapped asunder, so that a miniature which it had suspended, and which had lain concealed amid the snowy folds of her neckerchief, slipped from its hiding place and fell upon the table almost under the eye of her father. He had often suspected when he saw the gleam of the chain as it mingled with her hair, that the picture of Percival Wharton was appended to it, and he now eagerly seized the miniature before Imogen could prevent him. A look of triumph kindled on the countenance of Mrs. Musgrave, and even the features of her son lost a portion of their stolidity as he said to Imogen—

"You see that you haven't gained anything by trying to keep the picture so private. You might as well have let me see it the other day when I wanted to."

"As she refused to condescend to permit even me to see it," said his mother, "you could not reasonably expect that she would stoop so low as to exhibit it to you."

"If I objected to showing it to you," said Imogen, addressing her mother, "it was from motives of delicacy, knowing as I did that you have ever avoided the apartment containing—" she was going to add, "the portrait from which this was painted," but she left the sentence unfinished.

Mrs. Musgrave designed to make no reply except by a scornful curl of her lip. The eyes of Mr. Musgrave had in the meantime been fixed upon the miniature, which instead of the features of Percival Wharton, represented those of Imogen's mother, such as eighteen years before he had seen glowing with a freshness and beauty he had never seen excelled even by his daughter's. The lips, radiant with a smile bright as a sunbeam, revelling in the heart of an opening rose, appeared as if they were about to speak, and the clear, silvery tones of her voice like the music of fairy bells, seemed to break upon his listening ear. A sudden gush of delight filled his heart, so strong was the illusion which fancy had woven. It was as quickly succeeded by a pang of remorse, for the joyous voice was changed to one of mournful fervor, such as with, during her last moments, she charged him to be both father and mother to Imogen. Without saying a word he handed her the miniature, and abruptly rising from the table, left the toast undrunk in which he had called upon his daughter to pledge him. As he did this he encountered an angry glance from his wife.

"Imogen," said he, "let your mother see it—it will do no harm."

She obeyed, but the exulting look with which her step-mother received it faded away as her eye fell on the lovely features of her predecessor. The pain, however, occasioned by mortified pride, instead of producing humility, or causing her in any degree to swerve from the purpose she had formed of bringing about a match between Imogen and her son, only made her more determined to use every effort in her power to ensure success.

Imogen waited till she regained possession of the miniature, and then hastening to her room and throwing a scarf over her shoulders, she stepped into a balcony which overlooked the park. A few fallow deer which her father had caused to be brought from England, mingling in picturesque groups with those which had been procured from the American wilds, were the only living things which appeared in sight; and descending a flight of stone steps, she stole cautiously round the edge of the park under cover of the trees and shrubbery, till she gained the denser shades of the forest, where she expected to meet Percival Wharton. She now paused and listened, but the deep silence of the woods was unbroken save by the music of birds, or the bark of the squirrel, as perched on some slender bough, it sat eyeing her for a few moments, and then with almost winged speed darted away. The undergrowth of the forest had been cleared off, so that the evening sunbeams, streaming through the foliage, lay quivering like a veil of golden gossamer upon the fresh green moss profusely intermingled with wild flowers of delicious fragrance; while hovering above the distant mountains, which were mantled with a warm, mellow purple, floated a mass of snowy clouds, their lower skirts flushed with a faint, rosy light. The footsteps of Imogen fell silently as dew as she hastened toward a sweet, wild spot, where she and Percival had last parted, and which her heart whispered her was the one where he now awaited her. It was more than a year since, and then no parent's

interdiction had checked the sweet impulses of an affection not more freely than worthily bestowed. She had divined truly, and as she approached the spot, already wrapped in the gloom of twilight, by being encompassed by shades rendered nearly impervious by the mingling foliage of vines and trees, Percival Wharton, whose eye had caught a glimpse of her light colored garments, sprang forward to meet her.

Many faces might have been deemed handsomer than Percival Wharton's, by persons who think more of finely cut features than the ever varying beauty of expression: yet large hazel eyes, changeful in color as they were in their brightness—a mouth which almost stern in his graver moods, only made his smile the more fascinating—a clear, olive complexion, shaded by masses of dark, wavy hair, together with a figure full of spirit, if not exactly symmetrical, formed an ensemble which might have challenged attention rather than one which nature's hand had more daintily moulded.

"You have granted my request, Imogen," said he, "which of itself ought to satisfy me that the rumor respecting your marriage with Wyatt is false; yet why this agitation?—and why instead of smiles, after our long separation, do you greet me with scarcely suppressed tears?"

"They are tears of joy, rather than of sorrow," replied Imogen, "and yet I have little cause for joy, for what can a weak girl like me do, with no one to shield her from the machinations of an artful woman, who if thwarted in her design, will not rest night nor day till she succeeds in bringing upon me my father's malediction."

"To avert which you will yield to her wishes and marry her stupid son."

"What can I do? If you could only have heard the fearful words uttered by my father, scarce an half hour since, if I did not comply."

"And you will sacrifice yourself and me, because your father is, at present, subjected to the wiles of a woman who has the face of an angel, but the heart of a demon. Believe me, Imogen, he is now bound by the spells of an enchantress, from which he will one day be set free—whether too late or otherwise for your peace and mine depends on your firmness."

"When in your presence my spirits revive and my courage rises, but when there is no one to speak comfortably to me week after week, even month after month—then they both fail: fearful fancies flit through my mind, and I sometimes think that should I brave all it would only be to find that you, Percival, had grown cold, and had forsaken me forever. I wrong you to think thus, I know, but the taunts, the sarcasms, and the sneers of my step-mother—the reproaches, the threats, and above all, the entreaties of my father, to which is added the fulsome flattery of Wyatt, are like the continual dropping of water which will wear even a rock. Oh, Percival, I am sorely beset, and cannot answer for myself as to what I may be tempted to do. Perhaps I shall be goaded on to marry this hateful Wyatt, as you have just now intimated, and thus purchase a moment's repose at the expense of a whole life time of misery."

"Then shun the ordeal, Imogen. Fly with me. My sister's doors are open to welcome you."

"No, Percival, not now. I will try and bear up a little longer. It may be that the more generous feelings of my father's nature will be wrought upon."

"Do not flatter yourself with any such result as long as he is subject to the evil influences of the Circe he has taken to his heart. What then can I hope for, when you freely confess that your courage may succumb to their united and unwearying persecution."

"Percival," said she, earnestly, but calmly, "we will part now, but I will first give you my promise that I will not wed Merton Wyatt whatever may befall me. Not even though the day and the hour be set, and the wedding guests be assembled. This must satisfy you, Percival, for you well know that I am incapable of breaking a promise thus solemnly given."

"It does satisfy me as far as I myself am concerned, yet would you be persuaded to fly with me now, how much suffering would you escape."

"No, Percival, you are mistaken. Let me entreat my father to the uttermost—let me wait even until the last moment, and then if he do not relent I shall be ready to go with you. September next has already been talked of as the time for my marriage with Wyatt to take place. Be at your sister's, and I will find means to let you know in such season as to enable you to be here in waiting at the appointed hour, when the confusion attending the preparation customary at such times, and the assembling of the guests will give me opportunity to escape."

"This must content me, dear Imogen," said he, "since you will not be persuaded to go with me. A bugle-note, such as has told you of my arrival this evening, will be the signal that I am here. Be faithful and resolute, and all will be well."

With these words they parted. Percival springing upon his noble steed that stood impatiently champing his bit, touched him lightly with his spurred heel, and in a few minutes was out of sight. The stars were beginning to look down from the clear sky, and the night-bird's wild and mournful notes broke the stillness of the forest, and deepened the melancholy that weighed upon the spirits of Imogen as she stood listening till the last dull sound of the horse's feet as they smote the green sward, was lost in the far distance.

Encouraged by the emotion shown by her father at sight of her mother's picture, Imogen watched for an opportunity to once more assure him of the utter aversion with which she regarded Merton Wyatt, and of the misery which a marriage with him would consequently involve. It soon happened that they were alone, and while hesitating in what manner she could best introduce the subject, her father referred to it himself.

"Your mother and I," said he, "have had some conversation relative to your marriage with her son, and have concluded for it to take place the fifteenth of September. We should have set an earlier day, only he is obliged to be absent a few weeks on account of some property left him by his father in the Bay State."

All that Imogen could say to move her father from his purpose was of no avail. The contemplated absence of Wyatt was some consolation, and as it would yet be a number of weeks before the day named for her bridal, she could not but hope that something might take place to change her father's mind. Had she known how entirely his will was regulated by that of his wife, she would have regarded any such hope as entirely chimerical.

It was the fifteenth of September, and Imogen sat leaning over her dressing-table, her long, heavy ringlets falling over it, and mingling with the gleam of pearls and diamonds. At a little distance, thrown over the back of a richly carved chair, was a robe of white silk brocaded with silver, and resting on an ottoman that stood near, were a pair of white satin slippers, that looked as if Queen Titania might have worn them, when at the head of her fairy troupe she led the dance in the charmed ring round some greenwood tree. A sash fringed with silver, a pearl necklace, and a pair of tiny gloves beautifully embroidered, completed the bridal costume intended for Imogen. Lucy Fenno, who was to be the first bridesmaid, and had for some time been waiting patiently for her to rouse herself from her melancholy mood, now ventured to remind her of the hour.

"So late?" said Imogen, and then suddenly turning pale as death, she assumed an attitude of listening. "It is *his*—it is Wyatt's step coming up the gravel walk," said she, "I had hoped that he would not come."

"You must be mistaken, I think," said Lucy, "for scarcely ten minutes since I looked out of the window and saw no one in sight."

"No, Lucy, I am not mistaken. That step would have power to wake me from my last dreamless sleep, were it not that no human sound has power to pierce the cold, dull ear of death."

"Has hatred then as well as love the power of thus sharpening the senses? The footsteps of one, and only one, though they might fall silently as rose leaves to every other ear, would have music for mine," said Lucy.

Imogen rose. "I will go to my father once more," said she, "and tell him that it is impossible for me to marry Wyatt. I will tell him that I hate him—that I loathe him as I should the deadliest reptile that was ever suffered to crawl upon the earth as a scourge to the human race."

"Do not go, Imogen," said Lucy—"I beg that you will not, for, far from moving your father in your behalf, it will only occasion a scene of violence. Compose yourself and meet your fate with dignity since you have no power to avert it. Come, sit down and let me commence braiding your hair."

Imogen said no more, and resuming the chair whence she had recently risen, sat pale and still, while Lucy braided and arranged her long, luxuriant tresses. Once indeed she started, for she heard the signal note that told her that Percival Wharton was waiting for her. She immediately regained her composure, and when Lucy had finished her task, "let me," said she, "have fifteen minutes to myself," and as she spoke she threw her arms round Lucy's neck

and kissed her. "Go now," she added, "and let me have the time I mentioned, even to the last half minute." Lucy hesitated.

"I know what you are thinking of," said Imogen, "but you are wrong in your suspicion. My life is in the hands of my Maker, and I shall not seek to destroy it."

Thus assured, Lucy left the room.

Without a moment's delay, Imogen put on a riding-dress and hastened down the stairs that led from the balcony. Then, as on a former occasion, availing herself of the mazy windings among the trees and shrubbery in the park, she flitted along with sawn-like speed till she gained the covert of the forest. Here she was almost instantly joined by Percival, and upheld by his strong arm, she was able to quicken her footsteps that had begun to lag from fatigue. Five minutes brought them to the spot where two horses were in waiting. Owing to the badness of the roads wheeled vehicles of any kind were not much used in that part of the country, so that Imogen had learned to be a good horsewoman. She was, therefore, without fear or inconvenience, able to ride with such speed as to keep side by side with her lover, without obliging him to check his own spirited horse, so that they were soon beyond the danger of immediate pursuit.

At the expiration of the fifteen minutes, Lucy returned to Imogen's room. When she found that it was empty she half suspected the truth, and, therefore, lingered somewhat before she informed the family. When at last she was compelled to make known to Mrs. Musgrave and his wife that their daughter was no where to be found, everything was

thrown into a state of the greatest confusion. Orders were given for the grounds to be thoroughly searched, and Mr. Musgrave, when he recalled to mind the repugnance she had expressed to a marriage with Wyatt, and the deep melancholy which had oppressed her for the last few weeks, directed his steps toward the river, for he feared that its waters might have proved but too tempting a refuge from the fate she so much dreaded. It is possible that Mrs. Musgrave's thoughts glanced the same way; if they did she locked them in her own bosom. It is probable that her chief regret arose from being defeated in the plan she had formed of enriching her son by uniting him to a wealthy heiress. As for Wyatt, he regarded the whole affair with philosophical indifference, indemnifying himself for missing the eclat which he imagined would necessarily attach to himself, by appearing as the bridegroom of so beautiful and accomplished a lady, by partaking liberally of the sumptuous entertainment prepared for the occasion.

Toward sunset, the following day, Mr. Musgrave received a call from a clergyman well known to him, who told him that he had that morning united his daughter in marriage to Percival Wharton. Mr. Musgrave listened to this account with much less indignation than might have been anticipated; and subsequently when his wife urged him to disinherit his daughter as the well deserved meed of her disobedience, though he did not peremptorily refuse, he would not promise to comply. After the decease of his wife, which took place within a few years afterward, he was openly reconciled to his daughter and her husband, who, at his earnest request, came to reside with him in the old manor house.

THE SCIOTE GIRL.

BY GEORGE B. MAXWELL.

Evening was falling over the rocky island of Scio, when a young and beautiful girl walked along the shore. Her way led by the foot of the cliffs, between them and the sea, often so close to the latter that the water almost rolled over her tiny slippers as the surf came in.

Never, in the fairest days of Grecian loveliness, was there one more graceful or elegant than this Sciote girl. Her form was of exquisite proportions; her feet and hands were delicately small; and her face was modelled in the purest style of classic beauty. A broad, low forehead; large, languishing eyes; a straight and exquisitely chiselled nose; a mouth small almost to deformity; and a chin gracefully rounded formed the details of her countenance. Her tresses were long, luxuriant and dark as the wing of night. She wore a jacket of crimson silk, fitting tight to the voluptuous bust, and fastened in front by diamond buttons. The two upper buttons, however, were now loosed, disclosing the fine cambric cymar beneath, that, white as it was, scarcely rivalled the snowy skin. A girdle of the richest descriptions, with clasps set with precious stones, marked the outline of her delicate waist. A veil, fastened at the top of her forehead, thence thrown over her head, and so falling backward and downward, with its texture of gossamer seemed to give an ethereal aspect to her figure, whose wavy outlines it now concealed, and now revealed.

Suddenly, on turning the angle of a cliff, she entered a little cove, in which lay a skiff, and on the shore by it stood a martial looking man, apparently five or six years her senior. He was attired as a Greek mariner of the better class, and was armed to the teeth as the times demanded. The instant he saw the young girl he sprang forward and clasped her in his arms.

"At last, Zoe," he cried, "at last you have come! Ah, how I have waited for you!"

The maiden raised her dark eyes to his with a look, half tender, half reproachful, and said—

"You know not what I have ventured to meet you. Oh! if my father knew it, he would seek your life."

"I know that your father does not love me—that he has scorned my suit—that, perhaps, if he believed we met clandestinely he would make his dagger drink my heart's blood. Yes! I know all this, and were he any one else than your father, my blade should have crossed his before now. Is my blood less noble than his?" said he, speaking with impassioned eagerness. "Do I not trace my ancestry back to the gods themselves, to Theseus——"

"He is my father!" said his companion; and this was her only answer save a look.

Instantly the fiery glance passed from his eye, and he gazed on the sand abashed.

"Pardon me!" were his words at last. "I was wrong. And yet it maddens me that my suit should thus be scorned."

Tears were falling fast from the eyes of the young girl. She spoke.

"All will yet go well, Seyd, dear Soyd—only let us wait patiently."

"Will you not fly with me?" said he, at length. "See, my barge rides in the offing. In a few hours we would be beyond reach of pursuit—in a few days we could gain the coasts of Western Europe. At Marseilles, or some other port we will find a home, and while you live there in safety I will pursue my avocation. A little will suffice us, and gradually shall grow rich. Then, when your father has forgiven us, as he *will* forgive us at last, we will come back to our dear Scio to live. By that time, too, the war will be over, and we can reside here in security, which now we cannot."

He spoke earnestly and eloquently, and the maiden wavered for a moment. But it was only for a moment. However strong her love, duty was stronger. She answered sadly, yet firmly.

"It cannot be. I will never wed another, but I must not wed even you without my father's consent. Oh! remember the curse pronounced against those who disobey their parents."

As she spoke she raised her clasped hands pleadingly; and Soyd was not proof against her. In his secret heart he loved her the better for her lofty principles.

"I will accept your prophecy of brighter times," he said. "And now I must go. The sun is setting behind the mainland, and you should not be out after nightfall; for who knows but some Turkish corsair, with its thieving crew, may be lurking in the neighborhood? Your decision, Zoe, has assured my sword to my country for a while longer. Love for you came near triumphing over my patriotism, but now I shall be more eager than ever against the foe, hoping to win both wealth and glory, and thus gain your father's consent."

"Now you look and speak like the heroes of old Greece," said his companion, enthusiastically. "It is thus I will recall you to memory, as a Miltiades or a Themistocles."

And, as the sun dipped behind the horizon, they exchanged a parting embrace. The young suitor sprang into his skiff and pushed off from the shore, while the maiden, turning the angle of the rock, picked her way back along the beach. Soon the little boat shot out from the cove, and, urged by the

strong arm of the youth, began to skim over the tranquil waters; but its occupant continually looked back, and long after the light figure of the maiden had disappeared, winding up the rocks, he watched the place where he had last seen her.

The moon was just rising, like a silver shield, when our hero leaped on the deck of his vessel.

"All hands make sail," was his first exclamation. "The breeze is favorable, and, by morning, we must be on our way to Smyrna, off which, lads, we may expect to pick up a prize."

Seyd, as the reader may have imagined, was the captain of a small Greek vessel, which, in the departed times of peace, had been employed in traffic. But, on the beginning of the struggle for liberty, which the Greeks had commenced some years before, he had transformed his saucy craft into a sort of privateer, and had already done considerable injury to the Turkish commerce. About a twelvemonth before he had seen and loved the daughter of a rich Sciote, a retired mariner, who, on learning the youth's presumption, had scornfully rejected his suit. The young couple, however, found opportunities for occasional secret interviews, as Seyd's voyages led him frequently near Scio. On such occasions he left his vessel in the offing, and, at an agreed signal, the discharge of three cannon, met Zoe in the little cove on the beach.

The cruise of Seyd, after the meeting we have just described, was more than twice the ordinary length. While off Smyrna, he heard of a rich ship that had just sailed for Alexandria, and hastening in pursuit of her, succeeded in taking the valuable prize. The prisoners being set on shore, the ship burnt, and the spoil safely stowed in his own vessel, he set sail for Italy, whither he invariably carried his richest cargoes, as there the best prices could be obtained for them. On his return a storm blew him off his course. Several months had elapsed since his last visit to Scio, when, about daybreak, he made out the island in the distance.

A dark cloud seemed hovering over the hills, an unusual thing for that clear atmosphere. As the saucy little craft beat up to Scio, Seyd, alarmed and anxious, took his telescope and began to reconnoitre the land. Smoking ruins, desolated fields, and other marks of war and violence met his eyes. At last a fisherman's skiff was seen approaching, and, at sight of the Greek flag, its occupant came on board. From him Seyd learned the appalling news of the descent of the Turks on the island, the massacre of most of the male inhabitants, and the carrying off the women to be sold as slaves in the market of Constantinople.

"A few of us escaped by hiding in secret caves," said the fisherman. "The last of the spoilers left but yesterday."

Seyd eagerly asked if the man knew the family of Alexis, and what had been its fate.

"Ah! they are all massacred, all except his only child."

"And she?"

"She was carried off into captivity. Concealed in a cave, I saw the Turks drag her down to the shore, place her, with two of her women, in a boat, and row off to a ship, which immediately set sail. I was so

near that I could hear the words of the ruffians. They were speculating what price her extraordinary beauty would bring in the slave-market of the capital."

"Oh! God," exclaimed Seyd, and he staggered back as if a thunderbolt had struck him. But, in a minute, he rallied himself.

"When was this? Would you know the ship? Which course did she take?" he asked rapidly.

"It was the day before yesterday, in the afternoon—say an hour or two before sunset," replied the man.

"I think I would know the vessel again. She sailed toward the capital."

"Will you go with us, and point out the ship if we overtake her. Not quite two days start, and the winds have been ahead: if she is a dull sailer, there is yet hope."

The fisherman shook his head. "Her crew is three times as numerous as yours," he answered. "Besides, as I said, she sailed straight for the Dardanelles, where Turkish vessels are as plenty as eggs on Easter morning. Ah! captain, you are mad."

"No! I am not mad," said Seyd. "Listen! I was betrothed to Zoe. I will follow her if not another man goes with me. All I have is yours if you consent to attend us and point out the ship."

"I will not take your money," said the fisherman, with emotion. "You have told me your tale, now I will tell mine. The Turks surprised my house when I was abroad—they murdered its inmates, wife, children, sire, all—so that when I came back I found myself without a relation in the wide world. I will go with you. Revenge is all I seek. Your project is mad, but we shall at least have a combat, and in that I can send some of the accursed Infidels to Satan even if I fall myself."

They clasped hands, Seyd and that childless man, and together swore vengeance. The course of the vessel was instantly shaped toward Constantinople. As they glided by the shore opposite to the dwelling of Zoe, Seyd looked for some traces of its extensive gardens; but all was a smoking ruin.

His whole thoughts were now concentrated on one idea, the overtaking the ship that bore his betrothed to captivity. Her rescue, now in his cooler moments, was not considered possible; but he was resolved to avenge her first; and then stab her himself, if necessary to avert her dishonor. Terrible alternative!

How he watched every receding headland, impatient at the slow progress of the vessel. The winds were light, sometimes baffling; and at last it fell a dead calm. When this happened Seyd became almost frantic. He walked the deck day and night without succession. Boats were got out, at last, for he had seen vessels kedged along in the western Mediterranean, and in this way his little craft made some headway.

During the whole of a cloudy night the vessel was thus propelled, and, at dawn, Seyd found himself between two capes, with a vast bay sweeping inward. Numerous craft dotted the horizon. But just under the further cape was a vessel at anchor, which instantly attracted the attention of the fisherman: he called for a telescope, and after a long survey, pronounced it the ship that had borne off Zoe.

"She has been becalmed as well as ourselves, and having, as she fancies, no occasion to hurry, has loitered. But do you really mean to attack her, captain? You see now that she is four times the size of our craft."

"I would attack her if she were as large as an admiral's ship," said Seyd, courageously. "See—the breeze makes—we will spread every sail—and if God pleases, will be aboard of her before noon. Then death, or a rescue!"

He raised his arms fervently to the skies, as if invoking Heaven; and then gave orders for immediate pursuit. Like a bird, opening its white wings, the saucy craft spread its canvass, and was soon speeding over the bay, the water flashing under her bows, and the bright sunshine glistening on her sails.

The Turkish ship did not long remain idle either, but as if suspecting danger from the trim of the Greek craft, spread her canvass in turn and was off like some huge albatross.

And now ensued an hour of thrilling suspense, during which the two vessels were testing their relative speed. The race was closely contested. When the wind freshened the Turk shot ahead, when it grew lighter the saucy Greek gained on her larger opponent.

During these uncertain moments Seyd walked the deck the victim of suspense, which is worse than despair. At last the breeze freshened so much that the Turk began actually to run away from his pursuer. "Oh! God of Heaven," exclaimed Seyd, "am I to see her carried into captivity before my eyes? Stay! there is yet one hope—we have the long twenty-four amidsthips—I will aim the piece myself and try to cut away some important part of his rigging. The gun will indeed alarm the neighboring vessels, and bring down succor to the Turk, but if I can succeed in overhauling him meantime, I will save Zoe from dishonor, by dying with her."

A stern, rigid expression, perfectly frightful, was on his features as he ordered the twenty-four to be unslung, and himself proceeded to point the piece. The men gathered around him in an anxious group: they knew their peril, but were resolute to sustain him.

At the first shot the mast of the Turk was cut in half, about ten feet above the deck, and the sails fell consequently in a wreck over the side, bringing the ship nearly to a pause. A hurrah went up from the crew of the Greek vessel at the sight.

All was now hurry and confusion on board the Turk. Swiftly Seyd bore down on the enemy, spreading every inch of canvass his vessel could carry; for he saw several other Turkish ships heading toward his prey, as if to bring succor, and his object was to arrive first. The guns of the foe opened on him, but he kept on his course, resolute to find revenge, or perish.

One large vessel seemed for awhile, to dispute his ability to reach his prey first. At this Seyd, remembering the Turks' dread of a fire-ship, ordered his boat to be lowered to the edge of the water, as if he was about to desert his little craft the instant he laid her alongside the enemy. The stratagem was successful.

The cry of "a fire-ship—a fire-ship," was heard from the Turkish crews; and the vessel that was coming up to the succor, sheered off immediately.

"Now, lay her aboard," cried Seyd, with excitement flushing his face, and, as he spoke, he sprang into the rigging, waving his sword. "Let every brave man follow me. Comrades, think of Leonidas, and conquer!"

With a crash the two vessels touched; and the Greek was promptly made fast to the enemy. Then, with a wild hurrah, her gallant crew sprang on board the Turk.

Had the foe possessed his original superiority of numbers, the assailants would have been overpowered; but fortunately for Seyd, at the alarm of a fire-ship, many of the Turks had leaped overboard.

Like a mountain torrent, impetuous and resistless, Seyd's little band of heroes burst upon the foe. In an instant the *melee* was terrible. Wild shouts, followed by blows of the scimitar, and here and there a pistol shot told how fiercely the strife went on.

Seyd had but one object: to reach the hatches: to tear them open; to release the captives. The Turkish captain, divining his purpose, rallied the bravest of his men around him and struggled desperately to save his prey. But in vain. Each man of the assailants fought with the strength of ten, the fisherman striking terrible blows at the side of Seyd.

At last the decks were cleared, and the hatches removed, when Seyd sprang down foremost of all. A cry of delight and gratitude broke from the crowd of captives, as beholding the Greek dress of the intruder, they recognized a deliverer. But he pushed all aside, for he beheld Zoe, and to her he rushed. The next instant she had fainted in his arms.

He bore the insensible girl to the decks, ordering the remainder of the captives to follow as they valued their lives. Not a moment, indeed, was to be lost! The neighboring Turkish vessels, now perceiving the true character of Seyd's ship, were hastening to the rescue of their companion. The only chance of the Greek, therefore, was to crowd into his light craft, set fire to the deserted vessel, and endeavor to escape by superior fleetness.

Fortunately the course which Seyd had to take would bring his ship on a wind, a point of sailing in which she had few superiors. As he left the captured vessel the flames were already bursting from her hold and licking up the rigging.

Five different Turkish ships were now in pursuit. The breeze had freshened, but, on a wind, this was favorable to Seyd: so, leaving the deck a moment, he hastened to the cabin to see if Zoe had yet revived.

She was just beginning to comprehend her situation. Blushes covered her cheek at the sight of her lover. She sprang forward and fell into his embrace.

"Father—mother—all are gone," she exclaimed, with a burst of passionate grief, "and now I am thine, only thine, my preserver, my life."

Need we add that Seyd went on deck, after this interview, more eager than ever to escape. All things looked favorable. The shot of the enemy were already beginning to fall short, and his little craft had, as yet, received no material damage.

So rapidly did Seyd's vessel beat to windward, that, before noon, the Turks had given up the chase in despair. Seyd now hoisted Ottoman colors, fearing to meet other vessels of the enemy. The thought was a good one, for, toward evening, he actually passed a Turkish frigate.

Escaped from the Egcan, and making sail for a secure harbor, Seyd, at last, had the felicity of placing his bride on neutral soil. They were married, and lived eventually to return to their beloved Greece, now free once more, and holding a place among the nations of the earth.

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THE FLOWER GATHERERS.

BY F. BENJAMIN GAGE.

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THE FLOWER GATHERERS.

BY F. BENJAMIN GAGE.

It was spring—fresh, fair, and lovely spring!

All around was radiantly bright and beautiful. The white mantle of winter had fled away from the frozen hills.

The bright flowers bloomed along the borders of the green valley, and the unsealed mountain stream warbled its own wild music in its Maker's ear. The cooing wild-bird spread her golden wing on the soft air, and again her welcome song echoed sweetly through the mysterious aisles of the dim old forest.

A fair, young child went out from the white cottage to gather flowers. The soft breeze played among her golden hair as she bounded joyfully on from rock to rock. She gathered bright blossoms. She seated herself beneath a waving elm, on the flower-embroidered turf, and twined them in a fair and beautiful garland. But that beautiful garland faded away. Its bright hues were gone. Its perfume had departed; and the young child wept bitterly over its faded leaves.

Then she looked around, and lo! a strange, bright being came and stood by her side. She glanced up through her tears and wondered at his strange beauty. His look was full of Heavenly sweetness, and he smiled upon her as he spoke.

"Why dost thou weep?" said he. "Sorrow has not touched your young heart! Time has not stolen the bloom from your cheek! Go, gather the blue violet! Gather the golden buttercup—the wild blooming rose, and weep no more!"

Again the child wept. She held up her garland of withered flowers.

"I gathered them in the waving grass," said she. "They were bright with pearly dew, and the morning air was laden with their balmy sweetness. But, oh!

they have faded away! Their bright hues are gone;" and still the young child wept bitterly over the drooping leaves!

"And I, too, gather flowers," said he. "I gather the incense of their sweet lips. I gather the bright cups and bear them away to a far distant and glorious land, and twine them in a fair, unfading wreath. There is no sun in that land—no moon nor stars. But the air is filled with golden light, and balmy with unspeakable melody, sweeter, far sweeter than the wild bird's warbled song. And the flowers that I gather fade not away, for night comes not there, and the frosts of death gather not upon their fragrant leaves."

"Oh! how I should love to see that beautiful land," said the weeping child.

Then she cast away her withered garland, and held forth her hand to the spotless being at her side. He smiled upon her, and, as he drew nearer, he laid his hand upon her own, and whispered—

"Thou shalt see that beautiful land!"

Day rolled away.

The golden sun went down in the West.

Evening returned balmy and beautiful, and the mother sought her child.

She found her seated beneath the waving elm; but her eye was dim, and her cheek was hard and cold!

She had gathered fragile flowers—she had woven a frail garland. It had faded away, and now lay withered on her pale cheek!

But the Angel of Death had gathered a brighter flower—had borne it away to twine in the glorious and unfading garland of Heaven! *The young child was dead!*

THE ODOR OF A CRUSHED FLOWER.

BY KATE SUTHERLAND.

TEN years ago, Jessie Morris came to the village, a gay, high-spirited young creature. Jessie had passed two fashionable seasons in New York, and, from having moved in brilliant circles, and among the witty and intelligent, felt herself rather above the quiet, unpretending people of Hawthorne. Her father had been a city merchant; but his business becoming embarrassed, he, in alarm, closed it up, and with a small remnant of property retired to our pleasant village, in order to husband his diminished resources for the education of his younger children. Only to a limited extent, did Jessie understand her father's true position. She did not know how greatly reduced his means were, nor that even what he had in possession was held by a tenure which admitted of a question.

I was thrown frequently into the society of Jessie on her first coming to our village, and soon felt a prejudice against her on account of the air of superiority which she assumed, and the haughtiness of tone and manner too often apparent in her intercourse with others.

"She has no heart," I remember having said of her to a friend. "There is nothing about her to attract you, or cause you to love her. She is beautiful, I will own; but her beauty does not affect you with a sentiment. You look on with a certain cold admiration, but are not drawn toward her."

"Still, she is a pleasant, witty, intelligent girl," replied the friend. "She has a fine flow of spirits, and, I must own, that I cannot help liking her with all her faults."

"Her wit is sharp enough," I answered to this. "But I never call that a merit in any one. Sharp-witted people, I look upon as very disagreeable members of society. For your smart saying or cutting repartee, I have no fancy. Give me, above all things, in my friends, frankness, sincerity and sympathy. These are virtues against which we can lean, without feeling a rough corner, or being wounded by a thorn. Compare Alice Lane with Jessie Morris, and see how strong the contrast. Everything about Alice is real. How gentle, how loving, how earnest is her whole character. You sit by her side and feel that you are

near a friend to whom, in an hour of sadness or grief, you could open your heart. Not so with the wild city hoyden, if I must speak so strongly. You would as soon think of casting your pearls before swine as uttering before her anything that your bosom held sacred."

Thus had she at first impressed me. Others liked her better; for she was a girl of high spirits; and pleaded the less discriminating with her ready wit, gaiety, and off-hand mode of treating all subjects, even those which should never be approached with lightness.

Time went on his way. A year or two after Jessie came to Hawthorne, I left the village, and many years passed before my return. For a short time I kept up a correspondence with an intimate friend; but she, too, left the pleasant place, and from that time until I went back to the green and quiet valley, I knew nothing of what was passing there.

How steadily, like the needle to the pole, turns the heart ever toward the home of early days. Hawthorne was sunshine in my feelings, the loveliest spot on the earth. In my waking dreams, and in my night visions, the green places of that dear retreat were before me, and I could hear the birds singing as of old in the quiet elm tree that stretched its giant arms protectingly over our dwelling. Every year that went by, added to my desire to go back to Hawthorne. At last I was permitted to make the pilgrimage. To an old friend of my mother's, whom I had loved as a child, and leaned upon with affectionate confidence in maturer years, I wrote of my intended visit, and received, in answer, a warm invitation to spend in her family the time I passed in the village. I shall not soon forget the tender embrace with which she received me when I came, nor the few weeks I spent in her family.

But, how all was changed! Nothing seemed exactly as of old. The elm, in whose fluttering leaves I had heard the wind sighing for twenty years, still stood with its arms stretched over the home of my childhood; but it did not look as of old. In what it was changed I could not exactly tell; but the elm tree I

had seen in the many dreams of my early cottage-home, was no longer before me. And so it was everywhere. My eyes seemed to have obtained an intenser vision, and to look through the investing charm to the naked, skeleton reality.

I shall never forget the day I walked over Hawthorne for the first time in nearly ten years. To my eyes, there remained but few of the old traces of beauty; and yet, the honeysuckles twined above the doors and windows as before, and flowers bloomed as thickly in the gardens. Scarcely a tree had been removed, and I did not miss a single dwelling the remembrance of which had brought to my mind a feeling of pleasure. But I was changed. I saw with different eyes. My affections were not there, and, already were my thoughts beginning to go back to a distant city, led by the attractive power of absent and beloved ones.

Few real changes were there in external things about Hawthorne. But, when I came to ask for one and another whom I had known, the answers touched me with sadness. Death, sorrow or misfortune had visited many, and a change had passed upon all.

"And what of Jessie Morris?" I asked. "Gay, giddy, thoughtless Jessie Morris?"

"She is still with us," replied my friend.

"And the same as when I left?"

"Oh, no. Far—very far from it. Jessie has looked upon the dark side of life's picture since you were here. The remnant of her father's property, which he brought with him to Hawthorne, he was not permitted to retain. Some old claims against him were revived, which he resisted for some years, but finally they were recovered, and everything he had was swept from his hands. In a year he died, and the mother of Jessie soon followed him. An older brother, upon whom the family depended, died also, and Jessie, with two younger sisters to care for, was left alone."

"Poor girl! What a sad—sad change." All my sympathies were at once awakened.

"It was indeed a sad change. But there was still a sadder experience for Jessie's heart. You remember Edmonds?"

"Very well."

"He gained her affections, and deserted her when sorrow and misfortune came. For only a little while, however, did she droop like a beautiful flower smitten in the storm. She lifted her head again, although tears were on her cheeks and in her eyes. Two dear sisters looked to her as the only one to love and care for them, and they did not look in vain. It was then that her true character began to show itself. I was sitting in this room about two months after her brother's death, when the door opened and the dear girl entered. She was not dressed in mourning garments; they would have but mocked the sorrow that was in her heart. I shall not soon forget the pensive smile that was on her lips, as I welcomed her, nor the quickness with which it faded as she sat down by my side. The errand upon which she had come was mentioned without embarrassment or needless preliminaries.

"You may not know," she said, "that, since the death of my brother, all income has ceased. But it

is so. My two sisters have only me to look up to, and they must not look in vain. To them, I must now supply the place of father, mother and brother. God giving me strength."

"Noble girl," I could not help ejaculating.

My narrator proceeded—

"I could not but utter my warm approval of her generous purpose. To my question what she pursued doing, she replied—

"I have been well educated, and feel myself competent to undertake a school."

"A good school is much needed in the village," I answered, "and if you are ready to assume the task of instructor, I am sure you will be amply sustained."

"For the sake of my sisters, I am ready to do any work within my ability to perform. They must not, they shall not look to me in vain."

"And they will not, I am sure," I said, in a voice of encouragement. "Leave this whole matter to me. I will see a number of my friends, and introduce the subject."

"Jessie left me with a beautiful light in her pensive face. To me, she had never looked so lovely. Dear girl! She seemed to have nestled into my very heart like a frightened bird. There was no difficulty in the way of getting up the school. In two weeks she opened with fifteen scholars, and has ever since had her rooms full."

"And does she give satisfaction?" I asked.

"Perfect satisfaction. There isn't a child under her care who does not love her, nor a parent whose little ones are with her, who does not feel it as a privilege. We couldn't do without her in Hawthorne, Kate. Her loss would be a calamity."

"How like a crushing hand to a sweet flower is the pressure of adversity upon a true spirit," said I.

"Yes," returned my friend, "it brings out the rich odor that lies hidden in its heart."

"It does, it does! How like the odor of a crushed flower, must be the exquisite perfume of Jessie's new life. I must see her; I must know her again. We must be friends as of old, but closer and dearer friends."

A few evenings afterward I met Jessie Morris. My friend invited a little company to honor my visit to Hawthorne, and among those who came was the subject of this little sketch. I was prepared for a change. But it was greater than I had expected. At first I was half in doubt as to her identity. While I was talking with an old acquaintance, a delicately formed girl entered, and with exquisite grace of movement crossed the room to where the lady hostess of the evening sat. She was simply attired, and her light brown hair was plainly parted above her pure white forehead. There was not a single ornament on her person, and yet you did not feel that anything was wanting. But her face! I used to think her beautiful. When I had last seen her, there was a brilliancy about her that dazzled. Now she was before me a very impersonation of loveliness; chaste, classic, pure, yet warm with intelligence and love. I felt my pulses bound, and my eyes moisten; for the cause of this great change was vividly present to my mind. She stood before me a being purified in the

fires of affliction, and I could not, at the moment, banish the thought of all she had borne and suffered.

But, soon, I forgot all in the delight of a sweet and elevating communion of thought and feeling that followed our renewed acquaintance. I found that Jessie had indeed new views and new affections. Touch her where you would, there was nothing rough nor pointed. To do good, and to communicate in a loving, honest spirit, seemed to be her very life. When she spoke of affliction, and then her voice was low, intense, and exquisitely impressive and musical, she pictured it as a purifying trial—a blessing rather than a curse.

In a word, she seemed the very opposite of what

she was when I last saw her. Many hours did I pass in her society while I remained in Hawthorne, and their impression upon me can never be effaced. I trust that, when I left, the odor of that crushed flower lingered in the garments of my spirit. It must be so, for I have had better purposes since, and a more earnest desire to seek rather the good of others than my own pleasure.

Sweet Jessie Morris! Adversity has not really hurt thee. It has only revealed thy inner and true life, and made thy beauty like the beauty of angels. Thou art a form of goodness! Would that there were more in the world like thee!

THE MAID OF MELAS.

A STORY OF THE DAYS OF ALCIBIADES.

BY JOSEPH B. COBB.

CONCLUDED FROM PAGE 170.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CHARIOT RACES.

THE morning opened, but not so brightly as before. Misty clouds floated through the Heavens, and occasional showers sprinkled the earth. The fact was carefully noted—and in after years when the dreams of the aspiring hero had attained to a zenith of brilliant reality, and the genius of Alcibiades had surmounted all obstacles opposed to its ascent—many called to mind the predictions then uttered, that the fate of Greece, under his auspices, would be as a day of sunshine and clouds—brilliant but transitory, fatal token of her approaching dissolution!

The chariot races were esteemed much higher than any other of the Olympic sports. The common people were not allowed to participate in them. To acquire perfection, or even to attain ordinary excellence in these, required a bold heart, and the most consummate skill. They were contested over a track or turf, called the hippodrome, much larger than the stadium, and differing in shape. It was capable of admitting forty chariots at a time, and from this fact one can easily imagine the splendor and grandeur which distinguished some of the ancient public spectacles. The horses were always attached abreast, of course requiring more skill to drive than if paired off according to modern fashions. The driver generally stood.

It seems now to be generally settled from the writings of ancient authors, that this sport was introduced among the Olympic exercises, from the fact that in earlier days the chariots had been used in battle by kings and great warriors when mingling personally in the fray. They were armed on the sides and underneath with keen-edged scythes, and, in their resistless course, whole ranks of soldiers were mowed down—and they soon became a formidable means in turning, at a critical moment, the scale of victory. The shape of the car was low, open behind; running only on two wheels, and unprovided with seats, though elegantly modelled and finished.

The agonothetæ having taken their seats, heralds proclaimed the order in which the sports would take place. The main contest was open for all possessed of the requisite qualifications; but the race between Alcibiades, Cynisca and the Syracusan, being one of a private character, when they were to direct and drive their own horses, no person else could participate.

And now was heard the rattling din of the approaching vehicles destined to contest the first race.

Among these were some belonging to the kings of Lacedæmon, Macedon, Bæotia, and other neighboring powers. But the most conspicuous in the throng were the equipages of Alcibiades, magnificently adorned, and drawn by horses of the noblest appearance, and the most approved breed. In the midst of these was seen a car, somewhat smaller than the rest, but more richly decorated, to which four milk white horses of Arabia were attached, whose trappings glistened with ornaments, and whose slender limbs and glowing nostrils evinced the superiority of their nature. The driver was comparatively a slight, but compact youth, fair to behold, and clad in the gaudy and resplendent apparels of Persia. The complexion of this youth was most unusually swarthy—but as the wind would part the locks of dark brown hair, a close observer might have perceived a singular contrast in the snowy whiteness of the neck. He directed his mettled steeds with ease and grace, and his delicate foot was firmly planted to sustain the exertion of curbing their fiery ardor. This chariot Alcibiades had entered in the front rank to contend for the first prize—and many wondered that he should thus risk his fortunes, by trusting so seemingly incompetent and fragile a youth.

The agonothetæ now proceeded to cast lots, in order to ascertain upon whom the choice of position should fall, which was by no means an indifferent circumstance to the victory. In making the turn at the extremity of the hippodrome, a boundary stone had to be doubled—and consequently the car on the left, passing nearer to the point than those on the right, gained most considerable advantage. To turn this angle was a nice proceeding—and in fact was the great point in the race, as it was eminently the point of danger.*

The lots were so distributed that the chariot of Alcibiades was thrown near the extreme right—and thus far fate was against him. The car of the Spartan king occupied the preferred post. But nothing daunted, the Athenian whispered softly to his youthful charioteer, "you know the stake for which we contend—you see the danger before you. Keep your eye steadily on the progress of the race, and take advantage as occasion offers." The youth bowed a smiling assent, whirled his steeds suddenly round, and dashed gallantly forward to the place assigned him.

The chariots were now arranged in a long line, according to lot, twenty in number, with short intervals

* See Book 16th of Homer's *Iliad*, where Nestor advises his son.

between each vehicle, the line slightly curving from the left so as to make some more equality. At a given signal they started simultaneously from the *carreres*, amidst the shouts and cheerings of the crowd. The Ereotian and Macedonian, stationed on the right, took the lead; the Spartan and those nearest him still managing to maintain their vantage ground. But the chariot of Alcibiades was seen gradually to fall behind, which continued to be the case for the first and second rounds, and it was generally believed that the Persian youth was incompetent to manage his horses, whose rearing and champing evinced their restlessness under restraint. It was, however, by no means the fact, for the youth having before him, now, the whole appearance and situation of the race, abandoned suddenly the reins to his impatient steeds, and his artful and sagacious plan was rapidly developed by the consequences. The other chariots being now scattered at long intervals during the whole line of the course, the Persian, encouraging the ardor of his fresh steeds, passed successively one after the other, until he found at last only the Spartan ahead. Seeing the near approach of the youth, and having witnessed and quickly comprehended his manœuvre, the infuriated driver goaded forward his panting horses as his antagonist swept onward in his rear, aiming directly for the inner track near the point. The latter easily proved the overmatch, and the foaming white steeds, with heads erect and nostrils dilated, were seen far in advance, and rapidly nearing the goal. Roaring with rage, and maddened with disappointment at having lost a victory in the very moment of anticipated triumph, the angry Spartan, in his confused and desperate attempt, had wheeled his chariot directly athwart the line of the stadium. In a moment more he had disappeared in the clouds of dust raised by the rush of his antagonists behind, and his horses were seen wildly careering along the track with only a fragrant of the splendid car, which they had so proudly drawn at the beginning.

The flashing eyes of Agesilaus—the proud, disdainful looks of Cynisca told of the mortification which rankled within, as the Persian youth dexterously drew up his victorious Arabians amidst the universal greetings of the spectators.

And the green chaplets bound the brow of the Athenian, and he tenderly led away the trembling, fragile youth, whose genius alone had conquered difficulties and chances which all thought insurmountable, and had secured a triumph which all thought was lost.

"Thanks to thy bold and masterly conception, my sweet one!" whispered Alcibiades, as gaining the private pavilion the young girl threw off her disguise, and sank pale and almost breathless into his arms. "Nothing was ever more beautifully done—a more complete movement in detail was never witnessed or brought to so successful a result. But I must use a more trying and hazardous plan, no matter what befall—"

The second and third honors were lost to the Athenian.

And now had come the exciting moment—the grand finale of the exercises. The crowd pressed around more densely as the heralds proclaimed that the race

of Alcibiades, the Syracusan and Cynisca would now be contested. Anxiety was deeply pictured in every face—the agonisthetes themselves looked more agitated—as the distinguished contestants were stationed at the *carreres*. Fate was again opposed to the Athenian—for he was now thrown on the extreme right, the Syracusan having obtained the left, whilst Cynisca of course occupied the centre.

Four coal black steeds, remarkable for immense muscular developments, answered to the rein of Alcibiades. His chariot was also of ponderous size, and glittered with the massive, rich gildings. One would have supposed that the weight of the vehicle would necessarily impede its celerity—though none questioned the sagacity of the Athenian—yet many wondered. Nothing more splendid or better appointed had ever been seen upon the hippodrome than this equipage. Those of Cynisca and Calimachus were indeed remarkably beautiful and symmetrical—but no comparison was instituted against the Athenian's, for who could cope with the far-famed Alcibiades!

The signal was again given, and again the charioteers whirled off in the exciting race. The contestants were apparently quite evenly matched, for after the first round as the vehicles passed the throne of the judges, no discernible advantage had been gained by either. It was observed, however, that the Athenian having the extreme right end had gradually approached the centre, throwing the fair Spartan much nearer to Calimachus.

"By Jove," said a stout Athenian, "I had strange thoughts from the first as to the motives which influenced the choice of those clumsy, overgrown horses and that huge car."

"Be sure that movement bodes danger to one of them," said his companion. "Alcibiades is not wont to make a mischoice—but Heavens, look now!"

This last remark had been elicited by a glance hastily thrown at the chariots, which now had assumed a most perilous and thrilling attitude. The wily Athenian had thought that speed was not alone to be relied on in a contest of the character which he was now engaged in—and his fertile mind had fallen upon an expedient at once sagacious and fearful. The chariots, passing in the last round, had been forced more closely to each other, and from the direction of the Athenian's eye and his evident aim, it was seen that they must come together at or near the boundary point, and produce by a concussion the most imminent danger to the parties. The plan of Alcibiades, and the objects of his selection were now penetrated, and the judges and privileged spectators rose to their feet breathless with anxiety, for all foresaw the inevitable and fatal result should that plan be heartlessly pursued.

The antagonists approached the critical point; a shudder thrilled through every bosom as the ponderous chariot was seen still pressing to the others. The beautiful and intrepid Spartan madly urged her spirited steeds to avoid the threatened danger and obtain the lead. Her long, luxuriant hair floated wildly in the breeze raised by the speed of her career; and her fine voice was heard encouraging the Syracusan to maintain his speed and position, that the boundary

might be safely passed. But she had made her discovery too late—the black coursers were too near upon them—and now an adroit movement of Alcibiades threw her chariot full against that of Calimachus, and his own interlocked with them. A ghastly pallor had overspread the features of the Spartan girl, whilst the wild looks of the frightened Syracusan betokened his sense of the danger.

They were now opposite the column—the black coursers were suddenly and violently reined inward, and a crash grated on the ear.

The terrible shock was too much for the slender and elegant vehicles of his antagonists, but that of Alcibiades was unhurt. The terrified Calimachus leaped forward, but in the attempt to sheer one danger he rashly plunged into another. He missed his aim and fell—his feet became entangled in the trappings of the horses, and in an instant more he was trampled and mangled to death.

The most lively anxiety was now felt on all sides for the fate of the heroic Cynisca, who could be seen still standing on a fragment of her chariot, but whose horses, yet more hampered and pressed by the artful manœuvres of the Athenian, were rearing and plunging in the endeavor to extricate themselves. Two of them had been frightfully wounded in the confusion, and were utterly intractable.

And now the black steeds, almost unmanageable themselves, seemed to be charging full against them: the fragment of the carriage was crushed against the column, and the wounded horses fell under the pressure. Just then when all were looking with intense and appalling horror to see the Spartan sink before the dread fate which menaced her, Alcibiades was seen to stoop, and quick as lightning he grasped with his left hand the waist of the beautiful woman, and held her safely before the astonished crowd, whilst his huge coursers thundered forward to the goal, closely pursued by the remaining horses of Cynisca.

And the venerable and affectionate Socrates shed tears of joy as Alcibiades galloped triumphantly to the throne of the judges, and deposited his lovely burthen in the arms of her royal brother. But he whispered to Hipponicus, the intended father-in-law of his pupil—"ah, my friend, Greece will feel the consequences of this day's sport in more ways than one. Trifles, light as air, often produce the most serious results. Watch that frown which hangs like a dark shadow on the face of the haughty Agesilaus—see the ominous groups of Spartans separated from the throng, and conversing with impassioned gestures! These things bode no good. Did you observe that priestess of Ceres as she covered her face with the black veil when our champion rescued the woman? Thousands noticed it, and it will be taken as a sad omen. Mark what I say! The lessons of the Peloponnesian war will be renewed on fated Greece, and Athens will have a master, and both will date from this Olympiad."

At this moment the judges crowned Alcibiades again with the olive wreath; and the elated Athenians raised a loud shout of victory. They broke through all restraint, they gathered in crowds around the car of the victor—the black horses were no longer allowed

to perform their duty—and the loftiest names which graced the calendars of Athens, and gave greatest lustre to its pages, were seen mingling in the giddy throng which drew that car to the gorgeous quarters of its ambitious owner.

But there was one who joined not in this applause. It was the proud, revengeful Nicias, the jealous rival of Alcibiades. Turning to his companions he said, exultingly, "probably he will not find another barbarous and ingenious expedient to bring him down triumphantly from the Areopagus! The holiest laws of Heaven and of Athens have been ruthlessly defied this day by that man, and yet must he be let alone for the present. His destiny will reach its climax, but at the first turn he shall be brought to a heavy account."

"Yet you surely do not contemplate bringing these charges against one so beloved by the populace?" asked Clitus.

"Ay, does he," said a stern voice near them—"envy ventures far against those who excite her rabid fires. I warned Nicias that his prediction might be fulfilled. The terrors of the Areopagus, and the wiles of enemies will be alike unable to destroy the 'power of his influence.' Govern thyself, Athenian."

And the offended Socrates walked off. Years afterward the recollection of this rebuke by Nicias caused the philosopher to drink his cup of hemlock.

And the games were now ended. Tents were struck, and all moved for their distant homes. The plans of Alcibiades had succeeded—his crafty aim was accomplished.

The Spartans nursed the rancor which so many disasters had begotten within their bosoms, and soon after, when the proud Cynisca, fretting under her defeat, hastened her end by unlawful means, her admiring countrymen erected a magnificent monument to commemorate her life and deeds, and burned for the renewal of strife to satisfy their feelings for revenge. And they were soon gratified.

CHAPTER V.

THE MARRIAGE. ARTIFICE OF ALCIBIADES.

It was a lovely summer morning, and the feathered songsters carolled gaily as they took their flight—and the air was balmy and fresh from the dews of the past night, which yet glistened on the shrubs and flowers. The glories of the rising sun bespangled the gorgeous horizon of the East, and the mists were fast vanishing before his severe rays from the bright bosom of the Egean sea.

Again a splendid galley, loosed from its moorings at the city, sped swiftly over the waves, and made for the opposite shores of Eubœa. But it was not the galley which bore the lover of the fair priestess to brighten her solitude with his presence, and fill her young heart with joy. A large company of both sexes filled the benches of the galley, and in their midst was a destined bride, going to consult the auguries in the private temple of Apollo.

And the shore was gained—the barque tied up—the proud Greek maiden knelt alone before the altar on which the holy incense had been sprinkled, and which

held the reeking bowels of the hymeneal victim. Calyx frowned upon the devotee with a well dissembled but withering look; whilst his trembling and agitated daughter, with her mantle drawn over her fair, pale face, sat not far from him.

"Young maiden," said the priest in a stern, solemn voice, "I cannot promise much for thy marriage from the signs vouchsafed by the immortal god. But this I may venture to tell thee. Thy lord will rise to high and dazzling eminence in the state, but the neglected bride will not partake of his glory; Athens will find a master in the husband—and behold a slave in the wife. The gods, from some cause, are angry—a sacrifice and offering are needed to appease them. The union can never be blest—but let thy father bestow a part of his riches upon Apollo, and offer the customary sacrifice to the chaste Diana. Then may favor be granted—and thy peace secured. This is all I am permitted to say."

The maiden rose—more pale than when she had entered—and the party moved away. Her father had been present, and liked not the haughty and forbidding tone of the priest.

"And dost thou know, stern priest," he asked, "who is destined to lead home my daughter as his wife?"

"What matters it to me who the bridegroom shall be?" said Calyx. "Is it my part to show subservieney to individuals in making known the will of the immortals! Go, proud man, and were it the Archon himself the answer should still be the same."

The priestess drew aside her veil, and as she surveyed the retreating figure of the bride, she sighed and hung her head.

Poor girl, she was but a woman, and with woman's affections she feared to trust the words of her lover, when he told her that he sought not the marriage from love, but for the power and influence it would bring to him. Calcesthena shuddered to think that the idol whom she adored would soon be bound by vows other than he had so often plighted to herself. But the aspiring man had formed his plan, and woman, although the pastime of his idle hours, was not allowed, in his moments of cool reflection, to cast a shadow in the path of his ambition. The fair Melian knew him well—she shared his confidence—she felt that his best affections were hers—she loved him beyond all power of control, and she resigned herself to share his destiny as he himself should determine.

That same night the spacious dwelling of the Hipponeus was illumined with unusual splendor. Many guests were assembled, and the wine flowed freely, and congratulations were flatteringly showered upon the father, at the brilliant existence which opened before his daughter as the bride of Alcibiades.

And the chaste Diana was appeased; the fair bride was conducted with torches amidst the noise and bustle of an Athenian wedding to her new home, and all were delighted, and all envied the bright prospects of Hippante. And the night had passed—and morning came—and again friends and relations assembled to greet the newly married couple.

But the nuptial couch was tenanted only by the blushing bride. The groom had left her at an early hour. All wondered, and none wondered more than

Hippante at the coldness and apparent want of animation her lord had shown. She thought of the priest. The marriage was consummated—the husband was satisfied—and now other ends were to be attained—and he thought not of calming the disappointment of the bride, or allaying the wonder of friends. The wife was forgotten in the strife for glory.

Had Calcesthena but known this how lightly would her warm heart have pulsated!

The secret soon transpired. The Spartan ambassadors were in Athens. The object of their mission was generally known, and deep anxiety pervaded that vast city.

That very morning an audience was to be granted them before the popular assembly, and crowds had already collected to witness the proceeding, and learn the fate of Greece. The senate had been made acquainted with the full extent of their powers, and now the subject was to be brought before the people.

The Spartans made their appearance, and Alcibiades, already impressed with the dignity of his standing in this branch of the national councils, demanded of them the object and extent of their commission. Unexpectedly to nearly all, and especially to the senate, before whom they had made an expressly contrary statement, the Spartans now declared that their powers were by no means full, and that the proceedings could only be regarded as a preliminary to future negotiations. The crafty aspirant, affecting a transport of indignation, and turning his fierce eyes upon the astonished Spartans, flashing with fire and glowing with resentment, arraigned the audacity of a people who thus dared to sport with Athens, by sending to her councils men who knew not what they did, and who contradicted one day what they had asserted another.

"And can you still, Athenians," continued he, "tamely submit to such indignities? In the conduct of these men you behold reflected the usual duplicity of their republic. And what has not Sparta done to insult and provoke you? This abominable peace of Nicias shows the character of the man, and should be cursed by Athenians. Not a stipulation enjoined has been complied with on our side, whilst we have yielded everything to their rapacity. With the oath of alliance with us yet fresh on their lips, they form a league with Thebes, your ancient and inveterate foe. They promised to restore Panactium—but they first dismantled its walls and laid low its fortifications. Many neighboring towns were to have been surrendered to you—yet the soldiers of Sparta still revel in their streets. And can you endure in your midst, after this, such determined traitors and foes?" and he pointed to Nicias and the Spartan envoys. "No, Athenians, let the vile peace of Nicias be forever annulled. If Sparta draws the sword, we will not sheathe it until we have covered with shame all her truckling partizans in this city. We will defy her."

Words like these, spoken with all the fervor of excited patriotism—and in the style so peculiar to Alcibiades—went to the hearts of the Athenians already prepossessed by his glory, and the disconcerted ambassadors fled precipitately from the assembly, whilst the name of Alcibiades was rung in the air.

And none suspected that the credulous Spartans

had been made the dupes of an artifice planned by Alcibiades—that their perjury was the result of his intrigues. None dreamed of the unholy ambition which burned like a quenchless fire within his bosom or of his resolve to find some pretext which would again kindle the expiring flames of the Peloponnesia war. Here chance had found him—and he was successful.

And Athens paid dearly for the honors showered upon her rising hero, and Greece felt for many years the weight of wars directed by the genius, and sustained with rare address by a gifted intriguer and boi tyrant.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COURT OF AREOPAGUS.

THE reader must now run some few years ahead with us in this our truthful chronicle of past times. We must pass over the fierce battles, the bloody field which raised the glorious fortunes of Alcibiades, and wasted the strength of Greece.

The car of fortune does not always turn forward; we must now trace its backward rotations, and find the reverses in this hitherto brilliant career.

The twilight of a calm summer's evening had settled around—and the fair city of Attica presented scenes of singular commotion. From every quarter long, dense masses of people were seen moving in one common direction, and, by degrees, converging like parallel lines on an open plain near the foot of Mar's Hill. It was evident that some unusual event had taken place, which created the most intense interest. The dusky figures seen by the uncertain light seemed like so many airy spectres increasing every moment in size and number. And not a lamp was visible.

On the summit of the celebrated mount, and in the open air the members of the court of Areopagus had taken their seats, all venerable from age and the distinguished offices they had filled. The struggling moonbeams which penetrated the intervals of the grove, was the only light which fell upon that solemn scene. Silence reigned around, broken only now and then by a summons from the officer of the court, directed to the various witnesses who ranged themselves in front of the court. Among these was seen Socrates, Calyx, the priest, and Hipponicus, the father-in-law of Alcibiades. This excited no small curiosity—the sight of the venerable men appearing as witnesses before the highest tribunal known to the laws.

All eyes were fixed upon the silver stones, on which sat the accused and their accuser preparatory for trial. On one of these appeared Alcibiades, the greatest general of Greece, the petted favorite of Athens. But none who observed the proud glance of his bold eye, or the severe dignity of his demeanor, would have taken him for the accused. No unseemly and repentant habitment covered him, as was usual with all on trial—but with his accustomed self-will he had refused to appear before the court in other than his military apparel, covered over with the mantle he had worn on his last triumphant return from the

scenes of his glory. Strange sight for that age! The most renowned leader of his time—the most powerful man in Greece quietly seated to undergo a trial before the tribunals of his country.

Not far from the hero, occupying the seat which signified Innocence, was the beautiful priestess of Apollo clad in the purple vestments of her office, the fellow prisoner of her distinguished lover. Nothing of external emotion was visible in that fair countenance yet the girl had some misgivings, and trusted alone to the power and influence of Alcibiades to rescue her from the perilous situation in which she was placed.

Their accuser was the malignant Nicias—and the lustrous eye of the fallen hero flashed with anger as he beheld his unrelenting enemy calmly seated before him, apparently enjoying the triumph of having humbled his pride. And no light was there to reveal the cowering shudder which thrilled the frame of Nicias, as the fierce glance of his terrible rival pierced him in the moonbeams. He saw in the anxious faces and unusual excitement which surrounded the tribunal, the popularity of him whom he had denounced, and trembled to think of the retribution which might yet be visited upon him.

The tumult subsided—the hum of voices ceased as the revered Socrates submitted himself to the accuser's advocate for examination.

"Socrates," said the advocate, "thou knowest the nature of the indictment which renders Alcibiades odious to this tribunal. He is accused by Nicias of seditious conduct, impiety, and illicit connection with a priestess of our holy religion. These, under our laws, are serious charges. Answer then the questions which I propound as thy duty to those laws demands. And firstly, dost thou know of such connection existing as charged?"

"I have long known of the favor shown by Alcibiades to the priest and his daughter," answered the sage, gravely. "It is neither my duty nor my desire to trace crime."

"Canst thou tell aught as to the objects of the visits made by him (the accused) to Enbea after night?"

"Such visits were frequently made—I did not follow him."

"These visits then were always made after night?"

"I am not aware that the gods have excluded mortals from paying their devotional visits after night. I know many who have visited the temple at all hours of day and night."

"Is Alcibiades then so pious that he should perform his devotions at hours so unseemly?"

"The answer to that must come from his own conscience. Thou hast no right to ask such, and the sneer is unworthy and shameful as directed against an accused person."

"We seek not to be admonished—we wish thy testimony. Thou wert at the Olympic games with Alcibiades when he won the prize from the Spartan woman? Now who occupied the small pavilion which was attached to his own on that occasion?"

"I am surely required to answer strange questions. I am not acquainted with the domestic arrangements of my friend. I saw none but dogs about the pavilion you allude to."

As the sage made this answer, Nicias moved convulsively as if rising to his feet—but at a sign from the advocate he again resumed his position. Socrates smiled sarcastically as he met the eye of Alcibiades, who had also noticed the uneasiness of his accuser.

"Well parried," said the advocate; "one would suppose that subtlety as an advocate and not philosophy was thy study. We know that a dog guarded this tent—so much the more suspicious. I ask if thou canst tell who staid within?"

"I have served with Alcibiades in the field against our enemies—I have ever shared his hospitality—and I have known him for many years—I never went where he did not invite me when under his cover—I am not able to answer the question, as I never was within the tent myself—I have but little curiosity, and never am impertinent. Few others can say as much."

"Canst thou tell who it was, disguised as a Persian, that drove the chariot of Alcibiades in his first race?"

"Thou hast surely mistaken my calling. Is it for me to inquire into the character or identity of grooms and charioteers? I was the guest of my friend—not his sentry."

A short consultation now ensued between Nicias and the advocate, and then the latter dismissed the philosopher, despairing of all attempts, however well disguised, to disarm his self-possession or shake his fidelity.

Hipponeus was called. Inflamed with resentment at the neglect his daughter had experienced during her married life, and burning with desire for vengeance, the father of Hippante recited a string of facts which satisfied all minds of the truth of the third charge against Alcibiades.

Calyx was summoned—and the dejected priest stepped forth to undergo a fearful examination, the result of which might ruin himself—blast his only child—and cloud the prospects forever of his distinguished friend and benefactor. But at this stage of the proceeding the advocate of Alcibiades, hitherto perfectly silent, arose and eloquently objected to the introduction of a father as witness in a cause in which his child was a party. The laws recognised no such unnatural principle—and humanity sickened at the bare idea. The testimony of the priest in any event must affect the daughter, and he motioned for his discharge. The plea was sustained, and the priest retired.

Other witnesses, less friendly to the accused, were introduced, and one by one the charges against Alcibiades were substantiated. He was convicted of seditious attempts—of having by an act of treachery brought about a renewal of the Peloponesian war—of having shown on many occasions flagrant irreverence for the gods—of having violated the sanctity of temples by holding illegal intercourse with a priestess.

The brazen urn which stood in front was opened, and the judges by turns deposited their votes. This was done by black and white stones, the color of which always denoted the decision. These stones were drawn from urns which stood on either side of the one in which the votes were cast, and as this court always held its sessions after night, the white pebbles were distinguished from the black by holes bored through them.

The members had resumed their seats, and now the officer in attendance proceeded to tell the state of the votes.

Breathless silence prevailed—not a whisper was heard throughout that vast and crowded assembly. And Alcibiades betrayed no sign of emotion as his doom was being determined: the beauty of that face was radiant as when he had entered Athens, a short time before, at the head of his victorious bands. Aware of the contrivances by which his arrest had been effected, he had scarcely from the first doubted the issue of his trial—and he fortified his mind with all the native firmness which distinguished him, determined to crush, even in that fearful emergency, the anticipated triumph of his enemies. He had whispered courage and consolation in the ear of his drooping companion, and the spirited girl had regained her self-possession as the critical moment drew nearer. A flush of excitement tinged her delicate cheek—but the worst had now passed—and she feared nothing to come so long as Alcibiades was by her side.

Amidst this solemn stillness the decision of the court was made known. The black balls far outnumbered the white—the accused were condemned.

An exulting smile curled the lip of Nicias and his satellites—and the proud heart of Alcibiades was smitten to the quick. He had fought with honor the battles of his country—he was the terror of her enemies—and he, the descendant of a long line of illustrious ancestry, now condemned for treachery—and at furthest, for crimes trivial and inconsiderable when weighed in the balance against his meritorious services.

His haughty spirit revolted—and rising from his seat, he addressed the Areopagites and the assembly in the forcible and laconic style so peculiarly his own.

"Athenians, the early days of my life have been devoted to the service of your country. The best blood of my heart has been freely poured out in fighting your battles, and in leading your armies. I bear wounds of which I am proud—and the scars which they have left are proofs of my devotion. But I have lived too long. I have lived to feel the sting of ingratitude at the hands of my countrymen whom I have loved so well. Insidious counsels and envious intrigues have prevailed in circles where the pure light of justice has been wont to shine in solitary beauty. Old and arduous services are forgotten in imaginary crimes, conceived by base and jealous rivals, and are passed over for a few slight offences perverted by malignant foes. Justice has been melted down into unwarrantable and stern rigor—clemency no longer adorns the shrines where once she loved to dwell. Virtue sighing has departed, and the light of her beneficent presence no longer illumines the darkness which has crept in to supplant her.

"I have been hunted and pursued for years like some wild beast—and the testimony elicited this day proves the fact. Those who love me have been watched and persecuted with the single view of striking me. My best friends have been forced to appear before you to answer the base purposes of my enemies. Wisdom and philosophy have been insulted in the person of the revered Socrates—the natural affections

of the heart have been sported with in the person of one dedicated to a holy calling. This has been done to subserve the most wicked ends—I have been spared in no particular. What then am I to think? Can I forget the land of my birth, the country in whose service imperishable glory has covered my name? No, but I can despise and defy the counsels by which she is governed—and seek in other climes the peace which is denied me here. I love the people—they have honored me with their constant affection, and I shall not forget them. I know your laws, Athenians, and I will abide them. I choose my fate before that choice is submitted to me. I go into voluntary exile. This young woman shall go with me. She shall not stay to suffer for my sake, and become the prey of revengeful intriguers. I know what I do—let him who dares, attempt to stop me.”

Thus saying, he unsheathed his gleaming sword, and turning so as to display his full military costume, Alcibiades with that impetuosity and boldness which so eminently, on all occasions, characterized him, seized Calthena and advanced into the midst of the spectators. They opened their ranks before his strides.

Some attempts at resisting his progress were made by Nicias and his followers—but the people gathered around their favorite, and followed his footsteps with mingled admiration and grief. It would have been dangerous, even in the august presence of the Areopagites, to have interposed any obstacle to his retreat.

The fair girl kept by the side of her lover, and her step was firm and light as the mountain fawn, and there was no wavering in her gait.

The sea-shore was gained—the barge of Alcibiades awaited them—and at that solitary, cheerless hour of the night he bade farewell to the land of his glory and his fortunes, whilst his countrymen bewailed his hard fate.

The oars splashed in the bright waters—the light boat bounded onward in its course—and the lovers, seated side by side, were conveyed swiftly away on the broad bosom of the sea. And then from the distance, sweet, plaintive notes wafted in mellow cadences, fell upon the ear. It was the rich voice of Calthena warbling a wild, melancholy air of her own Melas. A dark figure, but dimly discernible, was seen standing in the stern, waving his adieus to the shores of his fatherland—the last dip of the oars was heard, and amidst the vast waves of the Egean, beneath the pale beams of the midnight moon, the dejected Athenians lost sight of the renowned hero, whose brilliant exploits and splendid genius had shed undying lustre upon his country, and whose great name alone was a bulwark against all her enemies.

And now we must leave the exiles to the fates which awaited them. At another day we may picture the years of solitude thus passed by the Athenian hero—his triumphant return, and his last days.

THE TWO SHREDS OF HAIR.

BY MRS. D. ELLEN GOODMAN.

A SIMPLE lock of hair—glossy and black as night—coiled into a delicate curl, and nestled down in the folds of this snowy paper, like the wing of a raven resting upon a fleecy cloud! A single tress of jetty hair, soft and silken—strange that it should thus touch the chain of memory link by link till it vibrates almost painfully—strange that it should awaken such emotions, and cause my heart to beat thus heavily. And yet it is not very strange after all; for the pale, fair fingers that placed this little treasure in mine, and the fairer brow that once wore the black lock, have long been cold in death.

Sweet Caroline—thine was a bright but brief existence. Too gentle and pure for this dark world, thy spirit early plumed its wings for Heaven. She was a tall, graceful girl, with a brow of marble pureness, and an eye softer than the young gazelle's. I have often gazed into those dark, gentle orbs, and tried to fathom their deep and wonderful expression; but I could not. There was something in their glance, though they beamed only in love and trustfulness, something which was not of earth. There was always a rose tinge upon her cheek, and a deeper dye on either lip; and then the long, jetty, shining braids of her hair twined so gracefully about her fine head, and their deep shadows made the whiteness of her brow and neck almost dazzling. Yes—she was *beautiful*, and each low tone of her soft voice fell upon the ear like the trembling echo of a harp, musical and thrilling.

Her home was in the bosom of bright, fair Connecticut; and its green hills and flowery vales, with the melody of its gliding streamlets, had been her companions, and the music she loved; and from the sweet influences surrounding her had her soul taken a tinge of romance and of sadness, which made the light of her lovely face all the more attractive and winning. At last my own dear friend left the home of her girlhood, and left her girlhood too. She stood at the holy altar with the chosen of her young heart, and spake the solemn vow which made her another's. A tear-drop dimmed her eye, and a paleness came over her cheek as she stooped to imprint upon her sick mother's brow the parting kiss; and her breath was quick and almost suffocating as she unlocked the entwining arms of her only sister from her neck, and turned from her anxious, tearful face. But a low voice whose faintest tones was melody to her trusting soul, soon banished the glistening gems from her cheeks and brought back the sunshine of joy to her drooping eyes. The dear one came in all her loveliness, and with her bright dreams to our own beautiful village—to be one among us—and now face to face we whispered of the past, and wreathed bright garlands of hope for the future.

Months passed on, and the light of her eye was yet undimmed—ay, it gathered intenser brightness. The glow on her cheek became richer, and I sometimes fancied the sweet, gentle voice grew tremulous and weaker; though I hoped it was a mere fancy. Summer had again thrown her wreath of many flowers over the brow of nature, and each sheltered nook rung with the echo of fairy music, while the green valleys and sunny hill-sides blushed and smiled beneath their burden of clustering blossoms. There was a smile too upon the lips of the young bride, as she walked forth to inhale the delicious odor that filled the air almost to heaviness. But her step was not as light, her heart not as joyous as in the happy past. A cold and withered hand was upon her heart-strings, and soon she yielded to its merciless touch. Like a flower she faded, as silently, as peacefully. We hardly knew that death was by till she had ceased to breathe, and lay cold and still, but oh, *how* beautiful in his icy arms. There was a crushing of hearts that had bowed to an earthly idol, a withering of blissful dreams, a bending to earth of broken spirits. There was an infant wail; but the tremulous cry fell unheeded upon the young mother's ear. Her quivering lips had pressed the last cold kiss upon its tender brow, and now she had tuned her harp in Heaven. It was a rural spot near her childhood haunts where they laid the lovely clay to rest; and in a few months the dead babe slept upon the mother's bosom, while over the blossom and the bud flowers less beautiful, but frail like them, shed their soft perfume. She has passed from the dark and cheerless world, but the gentle memory of my youthful schoolmate, my chosen friend, is yet fresh and green in my heart of hearts.

With this long, soft curl of *auburn* came a thousand bright and happy thoughts. It is not exactly auburn; yet there is a mingling of *gold* with the rich brown; and I fancy now that I see the slender thing waving with its fellow ringlets over a pure, fair forehead, shading eyes of deepest grey. With this tress comes to my mind a snowy cottage nestled within a shadowy, grassy vale, at the foot of that tall, bold mountain in good, dear Vermont. The air is so pure and fresh, and the summer breeze so soft and musical on that mountain's summit, and then the broad, green valley below, with its clustering white cottages and its velvet lawns, and the winding river, whose silver waters sparkle in the sunlight—all, *all* unite to make it one of nature's "beauty spots." That summer was a bright, a happy one which I spent beneath the roof of that sweet little cottage, with her from whose sunny brow I plucked this trembling little prisoner. Winter, that is the name of my mountain nymph. She is a fairy girl, and the music of her mellow voice has

often rung around that mountain side and through the shady glens, till its soft echo came floating back in the melody of the rippling waters, and the quivering strains of the spring warblers that shook their bright wings and soared heavenward till lost to the watching eye.

Dear Winder! though the smile on her full, red lips is ever fresh and dimpling; though the light of her soft grey eye seems ever clear and steady, and the glow on her cheek unfading, yet there *was* a time when lip, and cheek, and brow were marble white, when the sunny eyes were dimmed with thickly coming tears, and the heart throbbed in pain and agony. And those who watch her closely now, those who watch each varying expression of her bright face, may see a sadness in the playful smile, and a melancholy mingling in the deep light of her grey eye. Winder was very young when she gave her warm, loving heart away; and he who took the gift and gladly gave his own in exchange, was worthy the priceless gem. A few short months they were very happy, and wandered hand in hand over that mountain's brow, and drank in the glories of the surrounding scene. But at last the youth grew sick, and his lofty soul wandered in darkness. A deathly paleness sat upon his noble forehead, and a wild light was in his dark eye. Her name was ever on his parched lips, and he was again wandering over the hill-side and deep vales with her he loved. She was near, and it was her hand that smoothed the jetty locks from his fevered cheek, and she whispered gently in her subdued and trembling tones to his heart. He heard her at last, and with a faint smile coming over his ashy lip, he fell asleep.

Poor Winder! she was young yet for *such* sorrow, and it fell heavily upon her heart; and though as time rolled on, the bloom returned to her pale cheek, and health to her frame, she has never forgotten that manly form, nor the music of that voice. She is a dear, good girl, and her auburn locks have often been pressed by the palsied hand of age, while a blessing on her head has come from the heart which four-score years had not chilled. I well remember *one* personage, the most remarkable in my youthful mind of any in that pleasant little Eden-flower vale. She was a very old woman, and occupied the ancient *white house* across the narrow, wooden bridge, only a few rods from Winder's cottage. The building was almost as aged as its solitary inmate, and its dark brown walls bent over the green bank, and seemed to totter in every breeze that swept over the flat roof, while the tall, old oaks that towered around it had almost forgotten to clothe themselves in the fresh, green livery of their

young days, and stood in leafless grandeur like sentinels about the dilapidated mansion. It had been a structure of elegance once, and its now rusty sides had glittered in the sunbeams the proudest and lordliest dwelling for miles around. It was the only *painted* house in all that region, and that gave it the title which it still bore, though nearly half a century back the brown walls peeped through their covering of white, and the last vestige of paint disappeared.

I well remember the first time I ascended the steep, grassy bank, and trod the narrow, moss-grown foot-path leading to the old hall door. I clung to the hand of my smiling companion, and trembled I scarce knew why. But there was something about that strange old house that looked so frowningly down upon us, that made the warm blood chill about my heart. We passed through two or three large, vacant rooms, our footsteps echoing along the empty windings, and falling upon my ear like a death-knell, till at last in a small apartment that contained but little to make life pleasant, we found the old lady, and I started back as she arose from her seat and approached to meet us, with her bony hand extended, and her blue eyes, which seemed utterly rayless, directed toward the spot where we stood. She was bent nearly double, and it was with difficulty she hobbled along, calling out in her shrill, sharp voice—

"Is it you, Winder child; and who, pray, have you here?" She laid her skinny fingers upon my arm and peered into my pale face with those strange little eyes, until I turned away in an agony of fear from her gaze. The poor old woman was very deaf, and the bright, laughing lips of Winder approached her ear, while in her clear, bird-like voice she screamed out—

"Good mother, this is a dear friend whom I call sister. She has come far to visit our mountain home, and we have called to see you, and bring you this nice fruit!"

The old mother was satisfied, for a faint smile broke over her livid lips, and I fancied a ray of light came to her dull eyes. She took the little basket and crept back to her seat, while we with her permission wandered up the broken stair-way, and over the forsaken rooms of that ancient house.

We often visited the poor old creature after that, and I have gazed over her wrinkled face and wondered if the glow of beauty ever lit up those features, and if that wandering eye ever danced in sunny light. The weary frame is crumbling now to its mother dust; but perhaps the spirit that inhabited that crumbling temple is clothed in a beauty far surpassing earth's loveliest visions. But where has this little ringlet of auburn hair led me?

MRS. DODDINGTON'S BALL.

BY GRACE MANNERS.

"Lords, to the dance—a ball! a ball!"

Mrs. Doddington's party was a most successful affair. For full two hours had the whole square (a most fashionable one, reader,) been annoyed or amused, as the case might be, with the ceaseless roll of carriages, the clanging of carriage steps, as each in turn deposited its charge, the oaths of the coachmen, and the prancing of restive horses, the raising of windows for the numerous serving damsels in the neighborhood to take a peep at the hooded and cloaked ladies, as they tripped up the steps and vanished into the illuminated ball. Soon, however, all was comparatively quiet, and save for the occasional bursts of music that came through the door, as it now and then opened for the admittance of an ultra fashionable dandy, and the light that was thrown on the pavement from the lamp inside, all seemed as usual in the square. But

"Within 'twas brilliant all and light,
A thronging scene of figures bright."

Plumes waved and jewels flashed; ladies smiled and gentlemen flirted; and Mrs. Doddington was in the seventh heaven of ecstatic delight—for she had made a hit, a palpable hit, and felt herself securely perched upon the topmost rung of fashion's ladder; that most capricious goddess, to whom for many years her unceasing prayers had been made, with but doubtful success. But now, as she glanced through her gorgeous rooms, and caught sight of first one and then another of the well-born, gracious ladies, as the Germans have it, who at last she had been able to collect at her party, she was supremely happy for the time, and forgot all the rebuffs, the freezing civility, and the scarcely concealed contempt with which her former attempts had been met. But this, gentle reader, was a fancy ball; and if Hecate herself were to issue notes for such an affair, in a place that shall be nameless to "ears polite," she would find crowds willing to favor her, "for that night only." Not that Mrs. Doddington was anything like Hecate, far, far from it; she was a right pretty woman—vulgarily pretty—fat, fair and forty; and now dressed as a Sultana, with her thick ankles concealed by her full Turkish pantaloons, her fat, white arms covered with sparkling bracelets, and her face shining like a full moon from beneath her Oriental turban, she was the "belle ideal" of a Turkish beauty, who had been fed on Odessa wheat until she had filled up the magic ring, whose circle decides the point with a Turk, and is his standard of beauty as regards the female form divine.

Do you wonder then that Mrs. Doddington was happy? There was not a single blot on the fair plan of her ball—not one vulgar relation was there to stir up her anger; the death of a worthy old uncle of

hers and theirs—a respectable tailor—having, most fortunately, as she thought, just occurred, and kept them all out of her way; and no one of those present she flattered herself knew of the connexion. But she was mistaken. More than one of the grey-headed papas of her fashionable young guests had for many years worn garments of her uncle's manufacture, and knew of the death of the respectable old tailor; and what was worse, had in times gone by met his pretty niece in the shop, as in her girlhood she passed in and out with her then loved cousins. But over all these things she trusted the waters of Lethe had rolled—at all events they were banished from her thoughts now, and she mingled with her guests, being introduced now and then to persons she did not know, and complimenting all upon the felicitous taste displayed in his or her dress.

Two of these young ladies now attracted her attention, and *one* her especial devotion. She was a stranger, who as yet had not been able, even with the efficient aid of a very dashing looking Fra Diavola, to make her way through the crowd to her hostess. This was now accomplished by that worthy individual coming to her; and the introduction was made in due form, and the young lady mentioned as Miss Percy. Following her was a young girl, her cousin, to whom Mrs. Doddington bowed slightly, and then turned to the stranger, whom she immediately began to overwhelm with flattery and thanks, for honoring her on so short a notice, as Miss Percy had only been in town a few days. A few civil replies from the young lady contented her, and she went off to her toils and duty elsewhere, and left the young ladies together.

A lovely couple they were; and while Capuchin friars and peasant girls; stately dames of the old regime, and Indian warriors dance together; while Sir Peter Teazle and Ida of Athens are hopping in a Polka, and a tall French chasseur and Titania are whirling in a waltz, we will abide with these two young girls as "lookers on in Venice" for a short period. But first we must describe them. Miss Percy was a sparkling, bright, rather mischievous looking beauty; a brunette of the most striking order, with regular, finely chiselled features, raven black hair, and flashing hazle eyes that looked full of intelligence, and, softly be it spoken, not a little sarcastic; and now robed as a novice, with her simple white dress and flowing veil, her crown of white roses, and her rosy fingers looked very like an escaped nun, that no convent walls would ever lure back to their dingy precincts, especially when as now surrounded by a

knot of beaux, with whom she was exchanging courtesies and making promises of future dances, when she had found out who the Jews, Turks and Infidels were, by whom she was solicited. Different in every respect was Ellen Arlington from her cousin, both in appearance, dress and manner; and now making her first acquaintance with that motley scene, a fancy ball, she was not a little frightened by the strangely disguised figures who claimed her notice. Her own appearance was too striking, and she was too lovely herself to pass without many comments. A blonde, with a profusion of soft, fair hair, a skin like wax, and eyes so "deeply, darkly, beautifully blue," as to be almost black; robed as Night, with a black lace dress and ample veil, spangled with stars, a diamond crescent on her forehead, she was most lovely to look upon, and frightened as she was, she was not insensible to the many whispered praises of her own charms that met her ear. What girl ever was? And when it comes from knights and troubadors (carpet knights to be sure) as it now did to Ellen Arlington, is it to be wondered at if she speedily forgot her fright, and gave herself up to the enjoyment of the fairy scene.

"Ah," whispered a dark eyed youth, most gorgeously arrayed as a prince of some unknown kingdom or other. "I never before understood the full force of Byron's apostrophe, 'how beautiful is Night;' but now I *feel* it. Will you not, Miss Arlington, tread a measure with me? and then those stars on your veil can wheel their mystic dance, and fair Dian, throned on your milk white brow, can from that envied spot look down approval."

"Hail '*sparkling*' goddess from thine ebony throne," exclaimed another; "deign to look upon a suffering mortal, who, moon-struck, will never recover his lost wits, unless graciously favored by thy hand in the mazy waltz."

"What a profanation," said a sentimental looking youth, attired as a Troubadour, "to address such an ethereal looking being with such mundane trash. Deign rather, sovereign lady of the skies, to gaze with me through yonder casement at your fair sister stars, who are now trying in vain to emulate your brightness."

Bewildered by this storm of nonsense and mock sentiment from gentlemen that she hardly knew, Ellen gladly turned away to dance with one of them, thinking as she did so that the pleasure she received from their compliments was fully counterbalanced by the pain their freedom of manner caused her; "but I suppose," she thought, "that is one of the abuses of a fancy ball, for I see Cecelia seems to be pretty much in the same case, so I shall try and forget these foolish speeches, and think only of enjoying myself." Miss Percy was her cousin's vis-a-vis, and as she now stood surrounded by gentlemen, answering each one in the same way in which he addressed her, paying back the fulsome flattery she received in the same coin, and then by a witty remark exciting the laughter of the whole group; Cecelia seemed to her cousin to be in her element, and she was highly amused in watching and admiring her ready wit and graceful manners, and wishing she could attain her happy

readiness instead of losing all command of intellect from rhymes when she most wanted it.

Mrs. Doddington now made her appearance among the group of Miss Percy's listeners, and as they all respectfully made way for her, many a glance was exchanged in anticipation of the amusement her absurdities was about to furnish them. She was in a great flutter of spirits, and approached Miss Percy to reiterate her thanks for coming to her.

"I think it," she said, "not the least of my gratification of to-night, that my house is the first honored by the appearance of so distinguished a belle as Miss Percy, on *this* visit of yours to our city. I hardly hoped you would arrive in time, for I have known for weeks you were expected."

"The pleasure is all on my side, I assure you, Mrs. Doddington," politely returned her guest, "and I am only sorry that I had not time to prepare a prettier dress for your very brilliant ball. But this was the soonest arranged, and my heart warms to the novice's dress from my long residence in the Georgetown convent when a school girl. I had a great fancy to be a nun myself then, and so had a niece of yours that I was very fond of there, Mary Mason; she used often to speak of aunt Doddington, and the old uncle she lived with, uncle Jones; where is Mary now, Mrs. Doddington? I should be so very glad to see her again."

Had the earth opened at the feet of Mrs. Doddington; had her chandelier with its thousand lustres fallen from its high estate; or had all her prized and valued fashionable friends suddenly turned into demons, and this smiling, pretty girl into chief imp of the troupe, she could not have been more stunned and confounded. For uncle Jones was the tailor uncle, just dead, and Mary Mason was living in his family; and that Miss Percy, the handsome, distinguished, high-born, wealthy Miss Percy, should know all this (and know she did not doubt she did, as school girls are so communicative) was too much to bear. At first vague thoughts of denying the whole connexion rushed into her mind; then of saying Mary was dead, or that she had quarrelled with her, and know nothing of her, flitted into her brain; but that would speedily be discovered to be untrue, and she had made up her mind to say she was not in the city, when as her perplexed faculties regained their tone, and the whizzing in her ears ceased sufficiently to enable her to hear what was said, she found a gentleman answering all Miss Percy's questions about her niece; relating the death of her uncle, and finally offering to convey her to the house where Mary was still living, as he was sure she would not be able to call and see Miss Percy at such a time.

How Mrs. Doddington extricated herself from the group she never knew; but the rest of the evening she fancied she saw a smile of derision on the faces of her guests, and that they all despised her, and fervently did she wish she had never thought of giving this ball. Not so Miss Percy. Utterly unsuspecting of the consternation her question had excited, and not being able to enter into, or comprehend such infinite meanness as that which had prompted her hostess to think of disowning her own niece, she continued her conversation with the gentleman, her informant of

these (to her) simple facts, and soon other topics were introduced, and Mary Mason was for the time forgotten in the more puzzling train of ideas by which she was excited.

As she rested from time to time during the continuance of a waltz, she observed a new and most distinguished looking person had been added to the motley group that had gathered round the waltzers. Most magnificently attired in an Albanian dress, the gentleman stood leaning against a door in conversation with another, and whenever she looked toward him she met his earnest gaze fixed upon herself. That he was a stranger was evident, as he spoke but to the one gentleman, and that she had never seen him before, she was sure. Great, therefore, was her surprise, when at the ending of the waltz as she passed into the hall for the sake of a cooler atmosphere, he left his companion and approached her, and in a voice that was evidently disguised, addressed her by name, and then added—"nymph, in thy orisons be all *my* sins remembered." At first she felt indignant at the liberty thus taken by him without an introduction; but as he proceeded, and his voice lowered its tone, something familiar in it struck her ear, and she determined to go on with the conversation, that she might find out who among her acquaintance could so disguise himself as to baffle her penetration. That he knew her, and that well, she speedily discovered, and piqued by his successful disguise she continued to converse with him, hoping that by some oversight he would betray himself. But none such occurred; over on his guard, he gave no clue to his own identity, while at the same time he showed such a correct knowledge of her affairs, travels and journeyings, that owning herself thoroughly mystified she rose, and with a slight glance at his well shaped feet, which she declared she almost believed to feel cloven, she left him to join the dancers. "I shall see you at your aunt's to-morrow," were his parting words, "and trust you will not *then* disown me for a friend."

No one could enlighten her ignorance as to who he was; and Mrs. Doddington, to whom she applied, declared she had forgotten his name, but that he was a very distinguished personage, and had just arrived from Europe, where he had procured that beautiful dress, which was the real costume of an Albanian chief, and not a mere fancy dress. "A very distinguished person, and just returned from abroad," repeated Miss Percy, and as she ran over in her mind the many such personages she might know, a vague hope, accompanied with a thrill of delight, arose in her bosom that this might be *the one*, the favored one, who, months ago, when she was in Europe had been devoted to her, and made the first and only impression her heart had ever received. But that she should not know him, under any disguise, seemed impossible; and yet voice, eyes, figure, and all seemed changed. Her heart bounded with rapture at the bare thought of its being this favored mortal, and everything now seemed charming in her eyes under the influence of her own happy feelings, which before had begun to tire and weary her.

To seek out Ellen, the fair Queen of Night, and propose leaving the ball, was now her aim; but when she

saw her seated apart from the crowd, partly screened by a window curtain, with a handsome youth, attired as Endymion, on a low ottoman at her side, and by the looks of devotion and rapture on his face, and the blushes and happiness in hers, suspected that a very tender scene was being enacted; she had the charity to withdraw unseen, and once more joining the waltzers, gave her cousin time to recover her serenity sufficiently to appear before the eyes of others. Carefully had Cecelia kept the secret of the enamored Endymion, which had been confided to her by him the day of her arrival, of his intention to wear that costume. And now that his fanciful and happy gallantry had been crowned with success, and his coy goddess had confessed that his love was not unrequited, and owned that this last piece of devotion was irresistible; she was able to rejoice most completely with him, and the exulting hope throbbed in her heart that perhaps from this ball too she might be able to date her happiness.

Poor Mrs. Doddington meantime, though everything had gone off to all appearance most successfully, was wretched. She saw and knew that many of her guests despised her for despising her own relatives, and that they thought her a most unfeeling creature for thus outraging the decencies of life, by having this ball while her uncle was unburied; while she was vainly flattering herself they had never known of his existence. She felt she was *with* them, but not of them; and when having curtsied out the last of her great acquaintance, she heard as she passed the door of the now nearly empty supper-room, some gay sprigs of fashion, whom she had asked to her house without knowing them, because they were the fashion, give as a toast in her best champagne, "the memory of our hostesses worthy uncle, that ninth part of a man," and the shouts of laughter that followed, her mortification was complete. And as she laid her aching head on her pillow, she acknowledged all was "bitterness and vexation of spirit."

If Mrs. Doddington did not enjoy the next day's reminiscence of her ball, Miss Percy and Ellen Arlington did. The delicious chat over the breakfast-table next morning; the acknowledged happiness of the one, and the secret unacknowledged hopes of the other were alike delightful, and made both confess that it was the most enchanting ball they had ever been at. Noon saw Miss Percy seated in her aunt's drawing-room, looking as lovely in her morning costume as in her evening fancy dress; but not wasting her "sweetness on the desert air," for she is talking with a very stylish looking young man, who is seated close to her in that most dangerous of all seats a "confidence," and from the pleased looks of both neither find it disagreeable.

"And so it was by a mere accident that you stayed for the ball last evening," said Miss Percy.

"By the merest," replied the gentleman. "I had been to Washington looking for some one that I was told in New York, where I arrived a fortnight since, I should find there. But my search was vain, for I found my friend had returned to Boston. In the cars I met an old college chum, who persuaded me to stay here half a day, as we had not met for years. In the

course of conversation the ball was spoken of, and you were mentioned as one of the greatest attractions expected there. My friend was going, and as my search for my Washington friend could now wait," and here a look from the gentleman caused the eyes of the lady to drop, and a blush to mantle on her cheek, "I determined to try if I could see and speak to you without your recognizing me. How successful I was you have confessed; and I believe you had absolutely forgotten me; I should have known you in any disguise under Heaven."

"Not if I had changed the color of my hair and eyebrows, and spoke in a 'falsetto' voice as you did; to say nothing of the ferocious beard with which you covered half of your face. And then thinking as I did you were still in Europe. Even now that I see and know that it was you, I can hardly trace the resemblance."

"I am glad," replied the gentleman, "that imagination if not memory was my friend, and that you had allowed that to wander and conjure up the thought that it might possibly be your Naples friend who had thus suddenly appeared."

And now, reader, when a handsome young lady and gentleman recur to Italy and Italian scenes enjoyed together; when sails on the bay of Naples, and sunset and moonlight effects, and bewitching songs are talked over; when Rome and its carnival joys, and St. Peter and its glories are discussed; when Venice and its gondolas, and its *barcarolles*, and its moonlit seas are touched on; when sighs become audible, and blushes frequent as these scenes are recalled, it is but kind to turn away and pretend not to see or heed. So we must do, and jumping to the end, the natural end of all these sighs and blushes, only say that in a very short time after Mrs. Doddington's ball, that good lady having swallowed all

her vexation emanating therefrom, was boasting to every one "that at her fancy ball occurred the romantic incident of Miss Percy and Mr. St. Clair's first meeting on his return from Europe, where he had been dreadfully in love with her, and after he had been to Washington on purpose to see her. That he had had a large fortune left him, and was now able to marry, as before he was too poor and too proud to offer himself to such an heiress. And a handsome couple they would be. And at her ball, too, pretty little Ellen Arlington had completed her conquest of the rich Southerner. Mrs. Gray, she looked so lovely in her fancy dress as Queen of Night; and that this ball having gone off with such *éclat*, she had determined to have another one next winter." She never mentioned the "toast" she overheard, but digested that morsel in private like a wise woman; and when she found that Miss Percy had been to see her niece, not only once, but two or three times, and had taken Mr. St. Clair there too, she determined she would never again be guilty of slighting any of her relations—that were young and pretty, and that might chance for their own merits to have made friends among the "upper ten thousand." These two matches and the romantic incidents appertaining thereto, have of course greatly raised fancy balls in the estimation of all deep thinking young ladies—for who knows what may happen in the way of sudden likings, when Ellen Arlington's fancy dress brought the fastidious Mr. Gray to his acknowledgments; and Miss Percy's conjured up her lover from Europe. At Mrs. Doddington's next ball of the kind ten Queens of Night are expected to sparkle at once; and a whole convent of Novices to be let loose. I, therefore, warn all young bachelors to beware how they tempt their fate at fancy balls.

TURNING OVER A NEW LEAF.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

"I've put up with this order of things long enough," said Mrs. Perkins, her voice pitched higher than usual, and her face in a glow. "There is a point where patience ceases to be a virtue; and to that point I have arrived. I will turn over a new leaf."

"Take care," remarked Mr. Perkins, who was buttoning his coat close up to his chin, "that, in turning this new leaf, you do not come to a page harder to read than the one that now lies open."

"I will risk all that," said the wife. "Things can't be worse than they now are."

Mr. Perkins went off to his store. Holding her baby in her arms, swinging her body with a short, quick motion, Mrs. Perkins sat meditating certain domestic reforms, for at least a quarter of an hour before she was prepared for action.

The aspect of affairs was briefly stated. Mrs. Perkins had a cook, named Mary, who, six months before, had been installed in the family as "culinary artiste." She was from the green Island, and professed to know how to do everything, and a little more besides. On entering the house of Mrs. Perkins, she waited upon the mistress in her nursery, and there underwent the usual catechetical ordeal through which raw domestics are sometimes required to pass.

"Very well, Mary," closed this scene. "You can go into the kitchen. You will find everything there. After awhile, I will come down and give you any instruction you may require."

But Mrs. Perkins did not find leisure to do as she said. Her husband sent home provisions from the market, and Mary assumed the task of cooking them. When dinner came upon the table, it was "done," certainly. Mr. Perkins grumbled, and Mrs. Perkins was worried.

"Cooked to death!" said the former.

"I am in despair of ever having anything done right," sighed the latter.

At supper time, the tea had a strange taste to it; and at breakfast time on the next morning, the coffee was lukewarm, and as pale as dishwater. It was clear now, that Mrs. Perkins must see after her new cook, who could "do everything." A little sharp talking made some salutary changes, though it caused a slight exhibition of temper on the part of Mary, and left her in a sulky mood for several days.

By watching and scolding for a month or two, Mrs. Perkins got Mary so that she could do pretty well. But, on ceasing these amiable demonstrations, matters receded, and things went back to sixes and sevens again, and there remained until, roused into a sudden energy, Mrs. Perkins determined to turn over a new leaf in her family. Mary was not alone in her short

comings. Nancy, the chambermaid, and James, the waiter, were likewise sinners against the comfort of the household; and, in turning over the proposed new leaf, accounts were to be settled with them also.

The special cause of this demonstration against the lower powers in the house was the fact that, from being permitted to do pretty much as they pleased, cook, waiter and chambermaid had found it convenient to take as little trouble to themselves as possible. In consequence, their encroachments upon the comfort of the family, and their various short comings in regard to plain matters of duty, had become, to use Mrs. Perkins' own words, "absolutely unbearable." It is possible that such a state of affairs would never have come into existence, if Mrs. Perkins had "seen after things" a little more than she was in the habit of doing, and exercised a mild, but firm control over her domestics. Experience has demonstrated the fact—a hard one for some people to believe—that cooks and waiters, if left to themselves, are not generally apt to discharge their several duties with exemplary faithfulness. Mrs. Perkins had discovered this, but it puzzled her to understand how there could be so little want of principle; in fact, of common integrity, among servants as a class. Although the thing was plain before her eyes, she could not believe it practically, and, therefore, as a general habit, trusted in the ability and willingness of her domestics to do every thing right. Most sadly was she at times disappointed, yet experience did not seem to make her any wiser. Occasionally, it is true, when matters got desperate, she would "turn over a new leaf." But, after having done so, it was a serious question in the lady's mind whether the consequences of the remedy were not worse than the original disease itself had been.

But to go on with our story. After Mr. Perkins had been gone about half an hour, Mrs. Perkins gave the chamber bell a vigorous jerk. She waited for one minute—it seemed to her five—and then she grasped the bell-rope again. Nancy was never very prompt in answering such calls, and, as general thing, rarely heard the first bell. There is no doubt of the fact that she heard the second one on this occasion. There was an angry emphasis in the way the little clapper rung against its reverberating sides, that startled Nancy for a moment. But, was she to be frightened? Oh, no! Leisurely she ascended from the dining-room, where she was gossiping with James and Mary, and opening the door of her mistress' room, just as she was about rising to make another tintinnabulary demonstration, said, with an air of perfect coolness—

"Did you ring, ma'am?"

"Did I ring!" exclaimed the excited Mrs. Perkins "You know I did! Here! Take the baby!"

And she placed the child in Nancy's arms with the air of a woman whose mind was made up to act decisively in some matter of importance. Then sweeping from the room, she descended to the kitchen, and made a fierce attack upon Mary something after this fashion.

"See here, my lady! I've put up with your doings long enough. And now I'm going to have a change. There's to be a new leaf turned over in this house."

Mary, who was leisurely pursuing her morning's work, feeling in a very composed state of mind, started as if a torpedo had exploded at her feet, and turned, wonderingly, toward her mistress, who went on.

"There hasn't been a meal cooked in the house fit to eat for a month. Any one, professing to be a cook, to send up such a breakfast as you did this morning. Mr. Perkins hardly ate a thing, and, for my part, a mouthful of it would have choked me. It's outrageous! And just look what a state your kitchen is in. More like a pig-pen than anything else. I tell you what, my lady; this won't suit me. Just look at that barrel of flour! Where's the cover? Left standing open as a receptacle for all the dust and dirt of the kitchen! It is too bad!"

Mrs. Perkins was fairly up, and this was but a preamble, dimly shadowing forth the point, scope, and forcible tenor of the resolutions that followed. Having, as it appeared to her, given Mary some faint idea of the fact that she was in earnest, and that a new leaf was actually to be turned over in the house, Mrs. Perkins next attacked James, and holding up his short comings in bold relief, proceeded to give him such a "setting down." The man stared, wondered, became confused, and then got angry, and talked back. That wouldn't do. Mrs. Perkins was not a woman to take impudence from any one, especially a servant. So she ordered him to take himself off, bag and baggage. James did not wait for a second intimation, but retired while the leaf turning process was still in operation.

After rating James, Mrs. Perkins went back to the nursery. She was in a precious state of excitement. Upon the chambermaid were now opened the vials of her wrath. But Nancy, like James, faced the storm instead of bending under it, and gave her mistress "as good as she sent." In no mood to brook even a civil reply, Mrs. Perkins could not stand this, and ordered Nancy off of the premises as unceremoniously as she had done the waiter. Nancy retired from the room in the very midst of the storm, and left her mistress to cool off as best she could.

To every storm succeeds a calm. The calm that followed this outbreak, was, to Mrs. Perkins, like a calm at sea. The tempest roared no longer—externally all was calm—but there was deep, heavy rolling in the waters below. The ground swell was tremendous. While in this unhappy state, and while a consciousness of the folly she had committed, at first dimly perceived, was now beginning to grow clearer and clearer to her mind, the door of her room opened, and Nancy appeared, dressed to go out, and with her bundle in her hand.

"Will you pay me, ma'am?" said the chambermaid, looking duggers of indignation.

"Certainly," was Mrs. Perkins' frowning reply. "How much is it?"

"Five dollars, ma'am."

Mrs. Perkins thought for a few moments.

"Very well," said she, after satisfying herself that the amount was correct; and drawing forth her purse, took therefrom the sum of money required. Nancy received it with an offended air, and saying, half impudently, "good bye, ma'am," retired without even kissing the baby! That last omission was never forgotten nor forgiven.

Scarcely ten minutes elapsed, before Mary appeared and made a like demand. James had already taken his departure. Mrs. Perkins began to feel a little blank. But, she was a woman of spirit when her spirits were fairly up. It was not in her to bend an inch to one below her. So Mary was paid, and the lady was left alone.

The new leaf had been turned, but the page was blank!

Four long hours were passed from the time Mrs. Perkins and her offended domestics parted company, until her husband came home to dinner. Nearly the whole of that period had been spent by the lady in weeping. She felt mortified, helpless, and utterly discouraged. The baby was more fretful than usual, and little Aggy and Charley had beset her with their hundred wants, and almost driven her beside herself. There was no dinner cooked; she had not even attempted that achievement.

"Bless me!" exclaimed Mr. Perkins, when his rag was answered by his wife with the baby in her arms.

"What's the matter! Where's Nancy?"

"Gone."

"Gone!"

"Yes. She went away directly after breakfast."

"How come that?" asked Mr. Perkins.

"She gave me some of her impudence, and I told her to go," replied the lady.

By this time they were in sight of the dining-room, which showed no indications of dinner.

"Where's James?" was now inquired.

"He's gone, also."

"James gone! How did that happen?"

"I sent him off for the same reason that I did Nancy."

"Was he insolent to you?" said Mr. Perkins, with a marked expression of indignation.

"If you had heard him, you would have thought so."

"The rascal! It wouldn't have been well for him if I had been at home. But where is Mary? I don't see any sign of dinner. Has she gone too?"

"Yes. They're all gone."

"Humph!" Mr. Perkins stood thoughtful for a few moments, unable to comprehend the meaning of so strange a state of affairs. Soon, however, a dim perception of the truth began to dawn upon his mind. The recollection of some events and expressions of the morning came back, and he evinced, at length, his clear convictions on the subject, by saying—

"So you have turned over a new leaf, and with a vengeance, I should say!"

Mr. Perkins spoke a little fretfully. He was annoyed, and he could not help showing it. How the trouble had originated and reached its present climax, he understood as clearly as if he had seen everything with his own eyes, and heard everything with his own ears.

But the rebuke, coming as it did upon her own self-reproaches, was too much for the unhappy wife, and her only answer was a gush of tears. To sooth and calm, in the best way he could, was the next effort of the hungry husband. When it is understood, that he had sent home from market on that very morning, a particularly fine piece of show beef, and had gone over his lunch hour in order to secure a good appetite, the merit of this effort will be duly appreciated.

Before night, Mr. Perkins obtained from an intelligence office a couple of raw Irish girls, neither of whom could cook a potato decently. With the aid

of these, his wife set her domestic machinery once more in motion, but it labored hard, and creaked and groaned for a long time, before it ran easily. She has changed half a dozen times since, and now has pretty fair "help." But cook, waiter, and chambermaid, all have many failings; and their sins of omission and commission are becoming so numerous, that Mrs. Perkins seriously contemplates turning over a new leaf. She intimated as much to her husband a few days ago. He replied—

"For Heaven's sake, Jane, don't turn any more leaves!"

This caused a temporary postponement. But, human nature cannot bear everything; and as sure as Mrs. Perkins is a woman of spirit, and not to be imposed upon by a set of idle, careless, neglectful domestics, the leaf will be turned.

FATE AND FANCY.

BY MARY DAVENANT.

"Where is the maiden of mortal strain
That may match with the Baron of Triermain?"

"Possibly you may be right, Helen—perhaps dear Frederick may be a little too fastidious," sighed Mrs. Huntingdon, who hated to admit imperfections in any one she loved, particularly in her favorite nephew.

Helen, a merry school girl of sixteen, laughed as she replied—"why, mamma, one would suppose I had suggested a new idea. I am sure you know as well as any of us that a more fastidious, fancy-beset creature than cousin Frederick is not to be found, on this side of the water at least. Heigh-ho, I am sure I am wearied to death with his ridiculous notions, and only wish he *would* make haste and get married, that he might have something better to amuse himself with than finding fault with me."

"I trust he will, my love, and from all I hear there is now every prospect of it. But you know very well, Helen, that his finding fault with you is all in kindness, because the rest of us spoil you too much."

"A strange sort of kindness!" replied Helen; "why, if I am to believe him, I have never looked, spoken, or behaved as I ought to do, from the day I was born until the present moment. One of the first things I can remember is his mourning over my red hair, as he called it," (Helen's hair was *now* auburn,) "and my large mouth; and I went away and cried because he said to Charlotte that I would never be good looking."

"Oh, my dear, you should not remember such things—he only said it to plague you."

"May be so, but I shall never forget it—and ever since it has been the same tune—Helen do hold up your head—Helen take care of your hands—Helen your back will be round as a tub—Helen nothing will ever transform you into a lady—Helen you will grow up a perfect ignoramus, and so on, forever without end. I only wonder I don't hate the sight of him."

"Nay, Helen, you must not speak so of your cousin. I love him as one of my own children, and I am sure he loves you all like a brother."

"Yes, just like a brother," retorted Helen, "a nice, old bachelor brother, who inflicts all his odd humors on his unfortunate sisters."

"Old bachelor, my love! What are you talking of?—Frederick is a young and handsome man."

"He is four and thirty if he is an hour," asserted Helen, with decision.

Mrs. Huntingdon was at first incredulous, but after a few moments spent in putting ages and dates together, she came to the conclusion that it must have been thirty years since the death of her only sister threw upon her father's guardianship the lovely boy of four, toward whom from that hour she felt almost a

mother's tenderness. Within a year Mrs. Huntingdon married, and on the death of her father, which occurred soon after, the wealthy young orphan was transferred to her care, and grew up among her children. He graduated with honor at Cambridge, and subsequently spent some years in Europe, whence he returned just as his two eldest cousins were bursting on the world of fashion as belles of the highest order; and his youngest, Helen, a spoilt, ugly and troublesome girl of eight, had established her character among her brothers and sisters as "the worst child in the world."

Of course the busy public at once assigned to him the fairest of his elder cousins as his future bride, but as is mostly the case they were wrong. Frederick loved them both, and dearly too, but never dreamed of playing the lover's part to either. On the contrary, he at once assumed the place of a grave and thoughtful elder brother, and did his best, with some success, to induce them to adopt the highly polished and dignified manner he thought became them most.

The circle at Mrs. Huntingdon's, in which, though he nominally lived elsewhere, our hero was once more completely domesticated, lost of course none of its attractions in the eyes of her daughters' young friends by the addition thus made to it, and great were at first that good lady's anxieties lest her nephew should become the prize of some forward, fortune hunting damsel unable to appreciate his more noble and more sterling qualities. To her surprise, however, she soon discovered that, young as he was, Frederick was proof against blandishments that might have unsettled many an older head, and subdued many a harder heart; and the observation and experience of a few more years gave an entirely opposite direction to her apprehensions, and she began to fear that what was so hard to win might not to be won at all, which was almost worse than being won unworthily—for like most mothers of families (particularly of daughters) she had a holy horror of old bachelors.

Thus time went on. Charlotte and Elizabeth married, and beauty after beauty, the blonde and the brunette, the stupid and the spirituelle, wise and witty, flirt and prude had for a short season, in most cases it was short indeed, monopolized their cousin's attentions—but there was always a something, an indefinable something wanting about each and all of them that crushed the flattering hopes they had in their turn cherished of achieving so desirable a conquest. Still Frederick Wilmot continued single, though report at this time (for about the twentieth) had assigned him to be on the eve of addressing one who Mrs. Huntingdon

hoped with all her heart might soon become her niece, and the expression of her hopes on this subject to her daughter Helen, induced the conversation which this long introduction to our hero interrupted, just as he appeared in *propria persona* in his aunt's handsome drawing-room.

"Why, Frederick," exclaimed she—"you here? Charlotte told me you were to go with her to the opera this evening—you know Miss Arnold is to be with her."

"I know it," said Mr. Wilnot, disposing of his hat and stick, and settling himself (as gentlemen always do) in the most comfortable arm-chair—"but what of that?"

"Oh, nothing," said Mrs. Huntingdon, with a look however that interpreted it meant "a great deal," and a pause ensued, which was broken by Helen detailing to her mother some school girl prank, which made her fastidious cousin open his eyes at her and observe—

"Well, Helen, if these are the manners of the rising generation of women, may Heaven help us poor men! I had hoped you were improving, but I must give up now in despair."

"You gave me up seven years ago, cousin," replied Helen, laughing, "before you had been a month at home, and every month since into the bargain. The rising generation of women may thank Heaven all the men are not as particular as you are."

"My dear child," said Mr. Wilnot, "don't talk in that way. In the eyes of a man of sense a flippant manner will spoil the greatest beauty in the world."

"But as I am no beauty, it is no matter," said Helen.

"On the contrary, Helen, a plain woman has the greater need of every charm of mind, manner and accomplishment to render her agreeable."

"Indeed, cousin Fred. I know that well," said Helen, with a demure and furtive glance from the work over which she was bending, "for you have told me so at least three hundred and sixty-five times annually for the last seven years. I assure you I repeat it to myself every time I have a hard lesson to learn."

"One would scarcely suppose it. Have you learned the overture I brought you yet?"

"No! I hate it—I only wish mamma would let me give up music. I cannot bear it; strum, strum, strum forever is too tiresome for me."

"Helen you are incorrigible! a woman hate music! the most elevating, the most refining, the most spiritual of the fine arts!—but it is all of a piece," he added, *sotto voce*—"all of a piece."

"Come, Frederick, you must not be too hard upon Helen—she is a wild girl, and we have all spoiled her but yourself—and perhaps," added his aunt, smiling, "you may have gone a *little* bit the other way—constant schooling is sometimes of as little use as no schooling at all."

"I beg your pardon, dearest aunt—but I cannot bear to see a girl of Helen's abilities wasting her time as she does—why in little more than a year she will be going into society, and how will she appear if she goes on as she does now?"

"Don't distress yourself about me, cousin—I shall

do very well without beauty or accomplishments either—see if I don't," said Ellen, laughing.

"You have one gift certainly," said Frederick, "and that is good temper; so go and practice Tancredi, Helen, and I will not scold you any more to-night."

The year passed quickly round, and Helen kept her word on her introduction into the society in which her sisters had produced so great a sensation. She knew she was not beautiful, she did not pretend to be accomplished, and she had none of the high polish of manner for which her sisters had been so celebrated. Night after night was Mr. Wilnot horrified by her brusquerie; day after day did he lecture, vainly as ever, upon the positive necessity of her being more guarded in her speech and manner; but Helen would in spite of all speak exactly as she thought, and think exactly as she pleased, and turn away from those she thought stupid, and laugh and jest with those she found amusing; and what her cousin thought worse, waltz with everybody that asked her, and flirt with them too, which was worst of all.

"I'll tell you what, cousin Fred," said Helen, in reply to one of his strictures on this subject, "you are a greater flirt than I, and a more dangerous one, for I don't flirt with any one that wants to marry me, and you do. Now I ask you seriously—do you ever mean to get married at all?"

"Certainly I do, whenever I meet with a person to suit me," replied Mr. Wilnot.

"Then I can tell you of half a dozen who would suit you admirably."

"Who are they?"

"Well—there is Miss Calcot," said Helen, who for her own reasons would not mention the first name that rose to her lips.

"Phoo! she is too old."

"Not more than thirty—you are thirty-five. Then there is Julia Garret."

"She is pretty, but wants mind."

"Sarah Staunton, then."

"She wants heart."

"Caroline Grant."

"Ill-tempered, ignorant and trifling."

"Then Miss Horton—you certainly can find nothing against her, beautiful and accomplished as she is."

"She is of a low, irreligious family, and at times is very awkward."

"You are too bad, cousin; but I have one more chance—Ellen Warren, I am sure you admire her, and if I am not mistaken she snubs that poor Mr. Nelson, who is so distractingly in love with her, for no other reason in the world than that she prefers you. I am sure you give her great cause to think you are in love with her, talking with her by the hour as you do, and listening so devotedly when she sings."

"Because she sings well, and talks well too. I do admire her very much, and always have done so, but as to being in love with her, or she with me, it is all nonsense. She is not the kind of woman that would suit me at all."

"But if you like and admire her so much, why will she not suit you?" persisted Helen.

"I cannot tell you why, but I can feel why, and that is enough."

"Toll me, I insist upon it," said Helen.

"Well then—I have a high sense of the beautiful, and Miss Warren though handsome, by no means reaches my ideal. I like warmth of character, and I suspect her to be cold. I like nature, and she is artificial—she has none of the enthusiasm, the deep appreciation of genius and beauty and truth that is necessary, absolutely necessary in a person I can entirely sympathize with—another thing too, I suspect she is worldly minded."

"Heaven bless you, cousin!—for you must wait until you get there to find a woman to your mind. Stay, let me see all your modesty requires. Extreme youth, perfect grace and beauty, great accomplishment, intellectuality, and all that—warm and enthusiastic, with not a particle of temper, religious, gentle, never daring to say her soul is her own—the highest breeding, yet perfectly natural in her manner—well born and rich of course. Now do you really expect to find such a woman?"

"Certainly I do. I could not dispense with one of the qualifications you have named, except the wealth, I have enough for both."

"And this Venus and Minerva and Griselda, and three graces and nine muses all run into one, and female saint into the bargain, is to go down on her knees and thank you, a mortal man of thirty-five, for the honor of your hand, and promise faithfully to love, honor and obey you with all your fastidious notions for the rest of her life! Upon my word, cousin, you may as well give up at once. You are no longer on the list of marrying men. As you have told me a hundred times I give you up in despair, and shall give Ellen Warren a hint to do the same."

Mr. Wilmot laughed, little dreaming Helen was in earnest, but she was so. She suspected there existed in the heart of her friend an attachment scarcely acknowledged to herself, but which might increase to the destruction of her happiness. Though some years her senior, Miss Warren had from the moment Helen appeared in society treated her with distinguished attention; and Helen, warm hearted and generous, soon repaid it with sincere regard. She saw that her friend was beloved by one every way worthy of her, but with her imagination pre-occupied by another she overlooked his merits; and Helen justly argued that if this obstruction were removed she might possibly see them more plainly. The result proved that she was right. Miss Warren, shrewd and worldly minded as she was, no sooner found her own previous misgivings as to Mr. Wilmot's intentions fully confirmed by Helen's playful assertions, but as she soon discovered positive convictions that her cousin was too ridiculously fastidious ever to be suited in a wife, than she wisely determined not to waste any more of her smiles upon him, and thus lose a good match in the vain hope of securing a better. So matters were soon arranged between her and her hitherto desponding lover.

"You must be my bridesmaid, love," she whispered to Helen, at the close of the season. "Mr. Nelson has promised you a charming groomsman, so, dear Helen, do your best to captivate him."

Whether Helen "did her best" or not nobody could

tell, but she did captivate her handsome groomsman, but to the surprise of all, decidedly repulsed his attentions when she found they were serious. What could she mean?—Helen Huntingdon, the witty, gay, flirting Helen Huntingdon, without either beauty, fortune, or accomplishments, reject a man worth hundreds of thousands, and handsome and agreeable into the bargain! It was unaccountable, and to none more so than to Helen herself. Her family were most urgent with her on the subject, but Helen was positive.

She could not find a single objection to Mr. Laneham; she owned she liked him exceedingly, but would not be persuaded to think of him as a lover or a husband. Cousin Frederick was asked to use his influence, but he shrugged his shoulders and said, "he had never been able to influence her in his life, and could hardly hope to do it now." But he did venture a few words on the subject, which Helen cut short so decisively that he told his aunt that "nothing could be done—she was always wild and wayward, and would always remain so;" so for the five hundredth time her cousin gave her up in despair. Mr. Laneham was refused, and the whole family were provoked with Helen, who, however, seemed if possible more gay and wild than before.

"Will anything ever subdue that girl's spirit," said Mr. Wilmot to his aunt, as he was seated beside her one evening at a party watching Helen, who, her cheeks glowing, and her eyes sparkling with excitement, was rushing round in a waltz.

"Yes, two things, love and grief—may Heaven long avert the last—it would come with crushing force upon her. But I know no one who would be more improved than Helen by a touch of the tender passion. It was a sad disappointment to me that Mr. Laneham did not suit her fancy; it was strange he did not, for to me he was very attractive."

"It was very strange," said her nephew, "but Helen always was a most self-willed, unaccountable girl."

"I do not think you have ever done Helen justice," said Mrs. Huntingdon; "she has plagued you sadly I know, and is wild and wayward, but under that careless exterior she hides a depth of feeling, a strength of character, and a warmth of enthusiasm that none of my other children possess."

"An enthusiast she is in waltzing, I grant you," said Mr. Wilmot, smiling as he rose from his seat. "Come, Helen," he added, as she stopped for a moment before him, while her partner wiped his face and drew a very long breath, "you have tired Mr. Seldon completely out. Though my dancing days are somewhat over, suppose you take a turn with me."

"With you cousin?—who would believe it? I am so delighted, for I know you are a first rate waltzer," and they were soon moving round in time to the music, her slight and graceful form contrasting well with his tall and handsome figure.

"How I wish you would always waltz," said Helen, when the music ceased, and putting her arm in his they walked into a conservatory that opened upon the ball room.

"Always, Helen!—would you turn me into a dancing dervise?"

"But I mean at every ball. I never had so good a partner."

"I will waltz with you, Helen, if you wish it at every ball—but it is upon one condition—that you do not waltz with any one else."

"Why not?"

"Because, as you know very well, I hate to see you whirling round with any man who may choose to ask you."

"Then why did you never ask me before?"

"Simply because I never thought of it."

"Complimentary," said Helen—"and are you serious now in your offer?"

"Perfectly so."

"Well, then I hold you to it, simply because I like you better than any partner I ever had." Her cousin looked pleased, and for a moment thought Helen almost handsome.

Some six weeks after Helen was alone one evening in the drawing-room when Mr. Wilmot entered. Her parents were at the house of one of her sisters; but Helen being anxious to finish some work in which she was deeply interested, had remained at home. Her cousin took his accustomed seat, and the usual inquiries were followed by a silence of some duration.

"You are very industrious, Helen," said Mr. Wilmot, at length.

"And you are very silent," said Helen, "as I am so busy you should tell me something amusing."

"I?—I tell you anything amusing?—hugh-ho!"—here ensued several sighs of a most enlivening nature.

"What is the matter, cousin?—you seem so low spirited."

"I am not very well, I have been out of spirits lately."

"Dyspepsia, probably—but no, now I think of it, it cannot be that, for dyspepsia makes people unamiable, and you have been quite the contrary lately. I don't think you have scolded me for a month past; suppose you begin now, it will raise your spirits."

Had Helen looked up from the work that absorbed her attention so closely, she would have seen that something really was the matter with her cousin. As it was, she sewed on as diligently as possible, while he rose from his chair, walked several times across the room, and at last said—

"What a miserable, cross, ill-grained old bachelor you must think me, Helen. When I look back upon all the scolding and schooling I have given you for the last ten years, I almost wonder you do not hate me. And yet you will not believe me, I know—how can you?—it was a long time before I could believe it myself—I have lately found out that I am desperately, despairingly in love with you! Yes, you may well look at me so incredulously," he added, as the work dropped from Helen's hand, and she stared at him as if in a dream. "I, who have always prided

myself on my understanding, have behaved like a blinded idiot—I have been seeking after a shadowy being, while the living reality was beside me—I have been vainly endeavoring to school you into resembling the creature my imagination had shaped out as necessary to complete my happiness, and I have awaked from my delusion just as I have succeeded in making myself perfectly hateful. You need not speak, Helen, I know it is so, I have known it for a month past, and it has made me miserable. But I cannot give you up without a struggle, and all I can ask you, Helen, is from this time try, if you can, to forget the past; and let me appear to you what I truly am—the being whose very life depends upon your favor."

Helen's face had sunk upon her hands, and she remained silent. She felt that the veil was now torn from her own heart—all her indifference to her former lover, her keen-sightedness into the feelings of her friend who had loved her cousin, was now explained. Still she could not speak, and while she was striving to master the feelings that overpowered her, he continued—

"When I think of all the folly I have uttered on the subject of my marriage, I feel almost mad. I now unsay every word of it, and whatever have been my silly fancies I now know that my fate is to love you, and you alone. I have loved you from your childhood, and shall always love you. And now answer, Helen, tell me truly, have I any hope?"

Her cousin had not ventured to approach her, but stood at a little distance awaiting her reply. Helen's nature was above disguise; words were denied her; but in a moment she was in his arms, weeping as though her heart would break; and afterward smiling through her tears at the transports of her cold and stately cousin.

"My own blessed, blessed Helen," he murmured, as he bent over her. "No, you shall not leave me," he added, as she struggled to disengage herself—"while you are here I know it is not a dream. Now could I have hoped for such happiness as this?"

"But you forget, cousin, the perfect beauty you were to marry," said Helen, when she had a little recovered from her agitation.

"It was you, Helen."

"And the wit, and the grace, and the savante, and the good, patient Griselda."

"It was all you—you—you."

"I have always heard," she replied, "that love works wonders, but I never believed it till now. I must try, however, to keep up the illusion."

And Helen has done so, for though she has now been many years a wife and mother, Mr. Wilmot still thinks her all that and more—proving, as Helen often says, that though he long since submitted to his fate he still indulges in flirtations with his *fancy*.

BREAD UPON THE WATER.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

A LAD was toiling up a hill, near the city, under the weight of a heavy basket, on the afternoon of a sultry day in August. He had been sent home with some goods to a customer who lived a short distance in the country. The boy was lightly built, and his burden almost beyond his strength. Many times he sat down to rest himself on his way up the hill. But it seemed as if he would *never* reach the summit. Each time he lifted the basket, it felt heavier than before.

The boy was about half way up the hill with his basket, when a gentleman overtook and passed him. He had not gone on many paces, when he stopped, and turning round to the lad, looked at him for a moment or two, and then said, kindly—

"That's a heavy load you have, my boy. Come! Let me help you."

And the gentleman took the basket, and carried it to the top of the hill.

"There. Do you think you can get along now?" said he, with a smile, as he set the basket down. "Or shall I carry it a little further?"

"Oh, no, thank you, sir," returned the boy, with a glow of gratitude on his fine young face. "I can carry it now, very well; and I am very much obliged to you."

"You are right welcome, my little man," said the gentleman, and passed on.

Twenty years from that time, a care-worn man, well advanced in life, sat motionless in an old arm chair, with his eyes fixed intently upon the glowing grate. He was alone, and appeared to be in a state of deep abstraction. In a little while, however, the door of the room opened, and the light form of a young and lovely girl glided in.

"Papa," said a low, sweet voice, and a hand was laid gently on the old man's arm.

"Is it you, dear?" he returned, with a low sigh.

"Yes, papa," and the young girl leaned against him, and parted with her delicate fingers the thin, gray locks that lay in disorder about his forehead.

"I would like to be alone for this evening, Florence," said the old man. "I have a good deal to think about, and expect a person on business."

And he kissed her tenderly; yet sighed as he pressed his lips to hers.

The girl passed from the room as noiselessly as she had entered. The old man had been calm before her coming in, but the moment she retired, he became agitated, and arose, and walked the floor uneasily. He continued to pace to and fro, for nearly half an hour, when he stopped, suddenly, and listened. The street door bell had rung. In a little while a man entered the room.

"Mr. Mason," he said, with slightly perceptible embarrassment.

"Mr. Page," returned the old man, with a feeble, quickly fading smile. "Good morning," and he offered his hand.

The visitor grasped the hand and shook it warmly. But their was no pressure in return.

"Sit down, Mr. Page."

The man took a chair, and Mr. Mason sat down near him.

"You promised an answer to my proposal to-night," said the former, after a pause.

"I did," returned the old man; "but am as little prepared to give it as I was yesterday. In fact, I have not found an opportunity to say anything to Florence on the subject."

The countenance of the visitor fell, and something like a frown darkened upon his brow.

There was an embarrassing silence of some minutes. After which the man called Page, said—

"Mr. Mason, I have made an honorable proposal for your daughter's hand. For weeks you have evaded, and do still evade an answer. This seems so much like trifling, that I begin to feel as if just cause for offence existed."

"None is intended, I do assure you," replied Mr. Mason, with something deprecating in his tone. "But, you must remember, Mr. Page, that you have never sought to win the young girl's affection, and that, as a consequence, the offer of marriage which you wish me to make to her, will be received with surprise, and, it may be, disapproval. I wish to approach her, on this subject, with proper discretion. To be too

precipitate, may startle her into instant repugnance to your wishes."

"She loves you, does she not?" inquired Page, with a marked significance of manner.

"A child never loved a parent more tenderly," replied Mr. Mason.

"Give her, then, an undisguised history of your embarrassment. Show her, how your fortunes are trembling on the brink of ruin; and that you have but one hope of relief and safety left. The day she becomes my wife, you are removed from all danger. Will you do this?"

The old man did not reply. He was lost in a deep reverie. It is doubtful whether he heard all that the man had said.

"Will you do this?" repeated Page, and with some impatience in his tone.

Mason aroused himself as from a dream, and answered, with great firmness and dignity.

"Mr. Page; the struggle in my mind is over. I am prepared for the worst. I have no idea that Florence will favor your suit, and I will not use a single argument to influence her. In that matter, she must remain perfectly free. Approach her as a man, and win her if you have the power to do so. It is your only hope."

As if stung by a serpent, Page started from his chair.

"You will repent this, sir," he angrily retorted—"and repent it bitterly. I came to you with honorable proposals for your daughter's hand; you listened to them; gave me encouragement, and promised me an answer to-night. Now you meet me with insult! Sir! You will repent this."

Mr. Mason ventured no reply, but merely bowed in token of his willingness to meet and bear all consequences that might come.

For a long time after his angry visitor had retired, did Mr. Mason cross and re-cross the floor with measured tread. At last he rung a bell, and directed the servant who came to say to Florence that he wished to see her.

When Florence came, she was surprised to see that her father was strongly agitated.

"Sit down, dear," he said, in a trembling voice, "I have something to say to you that must be no longer concealed."

Florence looked wonderingly into her father's face, while her heart began to sink.

Just then a servant opened the door and ushered in a stranger. He was a tall, fine looking man, just in the prime of life. Florence quickly retired, but not before the visitor had fixed his eyes upon her face, and marked its sweet expression.

"Pardon this intrusion, sir," he said, as soon as the young girl had left the room; "but facts that I have learned this evening have prompted me to call upon you without a moment's delay. My name is Greer, of the firm of Greer, Miller & Co."

Mr. Mason bowed, and said—

"I know your house very well; and now remember to have met you more than once in business transactions."

"Yes. You have bought one or two bills of goods

from us," replied the visitor. Then, after a moment's pause he said, in a changed voice—

"Mr. Mason, I learned to-night, from a source which leaves me no room to doubt the truth of the statement, that your affairs have become seriously embarrassed. That you are, in fact, on the very eve of bankruptcy. Tell me, frankly, whether this is indeed so. I ask from no idle curiosity, nor from a concealed and sinister motive, but to the end that I may prevent the threatened disaster, if it is in my power to do so."

Mr. Mason was dumb with surprise at so unexpected a declaration. He made two or three efforts to speak, but his lips uttered no sound.

"Confide in me, sir," urged the visitor. "Trust me as you would trust your own brother, and lean upon me, if your strength be indeed failing. Tell me, then; is it as I have said?"

"It is," was all the merchant could utter.

"How much will save you? Mention the sum, and if within the compass of my ability to raise, you shall have it in hand to-morrow. Will twenty thousand dollars relieve you from present embarrassment?"

"Fully."

"Then let your anxiety subside, Mr. Mason. That sum you shall have. To-morrow morning I will see you. Good evening." And the visitor arose and was gone before his bewildered auditor had sufficiently recovered his senses to know what to think or say.

In the morning, true to his promise, Mr. Greer called upon Mr. Mason, and tendered a check for ten thousand dollars, with his note of hand at thirty days for the ten thousand more, which was almost the same as the money.

While the check and note lay before him upon the desk, and ere he had offered to touch them, Mr. Mason looked earnestly at the man who had so suddenly taken the character of a disinterested, self-sacrificing friend, and said—

"My dear sir, I cannot understand this. Are you not laboring under some error?"

"Oh, no. You, once, did me a service, that I am now only seeking to repay. It is my first opportunity, and I embrace it eagerly."

"Did you a service. When?"

"Twenty years ago," replied the man, "I was a poor boy, and you were a man of wealth. One hot day, I was sent a long distance with a heavy basket. While toiling up a hill, with the hot sun upon me, and almost overcome with heat and fatigue, you came along, and not only spoke to me kindly, but took my basket and carried it to the top of the hill. Ah, sir, you did not know how deeply that act of kindness sunk into my heart, and I longed for the opportunity to show you by some act how grateful I felt. But none came. Often, afterward, did I meet you in the street, and look into your face with pleasure. But you did not remember me. Ever since, I have regarded you with different feelings from those I entertained for others; and there has been no time that I would not have put myself out to serve you. Last night I heard of your embarrassments, and immediately called upon you. The rest you know."

Mr. Mason was astonished at so strange a declaration.

"Do you remember the fact, to which I allude?" asked Mr. Greer.

"It had faded from my external memory entirely; but your words have brought back a dim recollection of the fact. But it was a little matter, sir, a very little matter, and not entitled to the importance that you have given it."

"To me it was not a little matter, sir," returned Mr. Greer. "I was a weak boy, just sinking under a burden that was too heavy, when you put forth your hand and carried it for me. I could not forget it. And now let me return the favor, at the first opportunity, by carrying your burden for you, which has become too heavy, until the hill is ascended, and

you are able to bear it onward again in your own strength."

Mr. Mason was deeply moved. Words failed him in his efforts to express his true feelings. The bread cast upon the water, had returned to him after many days, and he gathered it with wonder and thankfulness.

The merchant was saved from ruin. Nor was this all. The glimpse which Mr. Greer had received of the lovely daughter of Mr. Mason, revealed a character of beauty that impressed him deeply, and he embraced the first opportunity to make her acquaintance. A year afterward he led her to the altar.

A kind act is never lost, even though done to a child.

COUSIN LIZZIE.

BY MRS. D. W. RHODES.

COUSIN LIZZIE had been with us from a child. She came from the city to our old country place in the spring, when the buttercups and spring beauties were hunted for in the meadows, and when, with our hearts tired of the long winter, and feeling as though released from a severe imprisonment, we sported in the sun the livelong day, keeping companionship with the birds and squirrels in the leafy woods. I can well remember her childish delight at all around her, so new and lovely; and I can also remember with what a warm welcome she was received in our group as a playmate.

Although she left an only sister in the city, cousin Lizzie soon seemed to forget all that could cause her to remember we were not her sisters also. Her desolate situation endeared her more to our parents. She well repaid our care and love; for like a gentle and pure spirit she moved among us, and in her kindness was irresistible. Thus she grew up in beauty and loveliness, until we were tall, young girls together.

I must acknowledge, in all candor, to the full awkwardness of a girl at that age, but it was different with cousin Lizzie. Her timidity hung around her like a beautiful veil. You felt that you caught glimpses of what that young spirit would be in time to come. If the bud was so beautiful, how splendid must be the flower.

It was at this time that a pressing invitation came to Lizzie from her aunt in the city to visit her. Anxiously we awaited Lizzie's decision. Between a love for her sister that even time and neglect could not wholly subdue, and a desire for change natural to all young hearts, she decided to go. With feelings of almost reproach I assisted her to prepare for her departure. At first I felt that she did not love us, or she would not be so willing to leave her country home. But the tears on her cheeks, and her earnest words as we stood beneath the trees the night before she left, removed all such feelings. We wandered on to all the old remembered places, as though Lizzie was never to see them more. By the soft moonlight we went down to the spring-house, where the water came gushing from the earth, and rippled away in the grass, until it came to the little waterfall, whose murmur could be heard from the window of our chamber. At last we returned to the house, and fell asleep in each others arms, feeling that no earthly trial equalled the one we were to pass through on the morrow.

We all accompanied Lizzie to the Hudson; saw her placed on the steamboat that was passing down; caught a glimpse of her beautiful face, all smiles and tears, and of a waving of handkerchiefs; and then she disappeared around a bend of the river. How desolate everything looked on our return. Something at

every step reminded us of our loss. At evening prayers my father unconsciously turned around to ask Lizzie, as usual, to commence the hymn. My mother wiped away the tears she could not hide as the prayer went forth for the one that had gone from us. Month after month glided by, and we were awaiting Lizzie's return impatiently, when there came an invitation to myself from her aunt, saying Lizzie could not leave her until spring. I recognized Lizzie's kindness in it all, and awaited my mother's answer with a beating heart. Mother smiled, shook her head, consulted with my father, and at last consented.

What with the beautiful scenery, the excitement of travelling, and the visit to the city before me, I was almost wild with delight, in my passage down the Hudson. At last New York appeared in view, with its spires, its public buildings, and its shipping. We neared the wharf, entered the crowded dock, and in a few moments all was confusion. One after another passed to shore. Friends came after them all, but none for me, and desolate and solitary I crept into a corner of the cabin, and awaited with a feeling of loneliness never known before, for some one to come for me. At last a gentleman appeared inquiring for me. I sprang forward, ready to welcome any one. We hastened through the crowd, entered a carriage, and were soon passing down the street all of streets, Broadway. The ride seemed interminable. But at length the carriage stopped. I was almost carried out, and before I could enter the hall, there stood cousin Lizzie ready to welcome me! I knew she was not changed by that beautiful smile, by the kind and sisterly tone of her voice; and I wept happy tears on her breast before I could speak my joy. The parlors were one blaze of light, and filled with guests; but my journey was sufficient apology for us to steal away to our own room; and there we sat unmindful of everything around us hour after hour.

I found Lizzie the same gentle, loving creature, but oh, how much more beautiful and womanly! There was a dignity indescribable in every movement, in every tone, and something I could not define dwelling in those dark, lustrous eyes, and playing around her small, child-like mouth. I was not wise then, and knew not that changes in the heart effect magical changes in the countenance. We were still sitting by the fire busily talking of all that had passed, for we had so much to say, and so much to ask, that I had not even thrown off my shawl; and Lizzie, half leaning forward with her hand on my shoulder, tears in her eyes, and her voice tremulous with affection, was speaking of home and my parents, when the door was opened and a young girl entered. I knew she

was Lizzie's sister by a resemblance, which though difficult to define, for they were certainly very different, yet was visible at the first glance. Miss Leslie looked at us both with an inquisitive, searching glance, as though she could read our thoughts, and then sat down beside us. I had never seen so beautiful and queen-like a creature before. Her manners were at first lofty and rather dashed with haughtiness, but that wore off, and as she conversed with us I was fascinated in spite of myself. Yet, when she left us, we both felt relieved. I had no experience, no knowledge of the world, but I felt there was no sympathy between us. I knew intuitively that woman's character. Designing, dark and treacherous, as Lizzie was open, pure and trusting, how could two sisters be so unlike!

I was soon in the whirl of fashionable life. Days and weeks flew by. Lizzie's aunt was kind and indulgent, and appeared to love us both as her own children. Evening after evening we were carried from pleasure to pleasure; yet when the excitement of the day was over, in our own room Lizzie and I had our hours of quiet enjoyment; and in those times of sisterly confidence how beautiful appeared the heart of my cousin! She told me of her aunt and sister, whom she loved dearly, and then hesitatingly spoke of a nephew of her aunt, who was then absent. He had been brought up with her sister, and was as a son and brother in the family. Then, even as I suspected the truth, with a modest drooping of the eyes and a blush on the cheek, she told me of their love; yet when she spoke of *him*, those beautiful eyes were lifted so full of nobleness, confidence and affection, that I could almost have worshipped her in her love and purity.

That love, so well required, so pure and holy, how beautiful it made her! Love had unsealed the inexhaustible fountains of her heart. It shone in her eyes, trembled on her lips, and rested on her brow with such a regal beauty, as at times entirely to change her appearance. I had yet to see the object of all this love. The parlors were crowded with company. Lizzie, with bright eyes and flushed cheeks, was carrying all before her with her wit and vivacity, and I was noticing from a little corner the emotions that stole over her face like light and shadow. Suddenly a stranger drew near her, and I knew by the deathly paleness and then the sudden glow, by the silence and then the constrained attempt to renew her light-hearted conversation, that it was the one she loved. She scarcely noticed him as he entered; but as the company gradually withdrew they were left the last. I had been in my room sometime, and was dreaming of home and happy faces, when a light footstep awoke me. Lizzie was on her knees beside my bed. Her arms were flung around my neck, and as I raised her head, the happy tears upon her cheeks told me of her complete happiness.

Lizzie's engagement with Mr. Eldron, the young and talented lawyer, the possessor of thousands, was soon known. All congratulated, all prophesied happiness—all but one, and that one her sister Isabel! I noticed her often as she sat watching those happy spirits. There was none of that holy love felt for a younger sister; none of that perfect peace that steals

over our hearts in seeing those we love made happy, depicted in her countenance. All was storm and passion in that wayward heart, and I felt that Isabel had loved him first. But she was not one to give up lightly. *She* was the gayest of them all. Lizzie's happiness was quiet and subdued, she was content to sit in a corner uncared for and unnoticed, with her heart brim full of happiness and love, that gushed forth to every one near her. But Isabel was queening it over them all. I even saw her in her madness trying to throw her fascinations over her sister's lover. But Lizzie, pure, confiding Lizzie, saw nothing in it all but sisterly love, and said in her winning way, "she was so glad her choice had met with her sister's approval." Of that one so well beloved, I have said nothing. It is enough to say that he was worthy of it all, and that never had I seen another to whom I would have so willingly resigned my beloved cousin.

Isabel had no confidants. She treated me after months had passed under the same roof with the same reserve. She wished me to admire her, to be dazzled by her beauty, her accomplishments and intellect, but she asked not for love. I distrusted her more and more. I felt it a holy and sacred charge to watch over cousin Lizzie and her interests, but I could not breathe one word of my suspicions to her. How could I tell her that one so dearly loved repaid it all so illy? How could I show to her pure heart one of the blackest pages in the world's book! Thus I lulled my cares to rest.

It was a dismal, dull day. Lizzie was not well when Mr. Eldron called, and I went down to make her excuse. Hastily entering the room I saw Isabel standing before Mr. Eldron. Her hand was raised threateningly, and her face was so full of anguish that I almost uttered a cry. Isabel was too well skilled in dissimulation, however, not to overcome her emotions; but Mr. Eldron, little accustomed to deceit, started and blushed, and scarcely hearing my words, hastened from the house. There we stood face to face; and with newly awakened suspicions I looked into Isabel's eyes, with a gaze so indignant that it required all her courage to summon a look of defiance as she turned away. Isabel felt that my eye was upon her, and she was more prudent; but my suspicions were only strengthened. And yet suspicions of what? Henry Eldron's love was still the same. I could not doubt him when I saw the eagerness with which he awaited Lizzie's appearance. Still, at times he gazed into her eyes with a look so inquiring, so almost reproachful, as though he must tell her all that was in his heart. And yet I was silent! Strange infatuation—hateful prudence! The time was drawing near when the storm was to burst over our heads.

Spring was coming, beautiful, lovely spring. I was tired of the city, of its noise, confusion and mirth. My heart was at home with the early flowers, the bees and birds, and all the charms that spring throws around the country. But I had promised to bring Lizzie home with me, and I could not resist her pleadings to stay for a while longer. Several families were to remove to their residences on the Hudson, and we also were to accompany them. If we had enjoyed ourselves in the city, how much more

would we among the beauties of nature. It seemed like home to me. I welcomed the birds, the flowers, and the trees as old familiar friends, whom long absence had only made the more dear. Little assemblies met night after night at these country mansions. Friends came up from the city. There was nothing but enjoyment. I remember our last evening at a friend's, and remember it as though it was yesterday. Those beautiful sisters stood before me arrayed for the evening. Isabel was leaning against the window, with her dark eyes bent on us, as I was arranging a wreath among her sister's hair. The soft light of a lamp fell over her. There was a wild light in those dark eyes, a fever glow on each cheek contrasting with the marble brow, over which hung dark curls half concealing the exquisite profile, that was turned toward me. The lips were firmly compressed, as though to keep back the thoughts that must escape them, and even over all that beauty hung a shadow of unhappiness and evil. Her dress of rich satin, that caught the color of a blush rose, among the rich, heavy folds: the overdress of delicate lace, falling half over the dress and drooping over the arms, was looped up on the shoulders with diamond clasps. Brilliants were among her dark hair. Thus attired, in her stern, haughty attitude, she looked a perfect queen. The wreath was placed among cousin Lizzie's bright curls, and she bounded from her seat and stood before us on the low window seat that overlooked the gardens. Her dress of thin muslin floated in the night wind, as it lifted the curls from her neck. Here and there a white rosebud of the wreath peeped out like a beautiful pearl. Pearls lay on the neck and arms, not more pure than the wearer; and in her light, graceful attitude she seemed as a spirit ready to leave us. Her dark blue eyes had a half pensive, half joyous light, telling that the heart was brim full of happiness, yet that she would repress it. The purity, the goodness that dwelt in the heart of my cousin rested on her face as though angels had been communing with her. How lightly our hearts bounded as we kept time to the music with our feet. I could see Lizzie moving through the waltz like a spirit of light. I could see the happy face of her lover as he watched her at a little distance, and how could sad thoughts dwell in my heart! No—I cast them from me and entered with a joyous spirit among the dancers.

Isabel I had not seen for some time, and wearied of the exercise, noise and nonsense, I stole away, and almost in a dream, found myself in a room far from the gay throng. There was no light save the moon shining through the muslin curtains, and throwing shadows on the walls around me. The windows looked upon the gardens, and I could see among the trees white garments floating, and hear now and then a silvery laugh. I could hear also dancing feet that had moved to the merry music, and now could not refrain from tripping over the gravelled paths. The scene was enchanting. I leaned my burning brow on the stone before me, with my spirit wrapped in a sort of ecstasy. I was awakened from my reverie by steps beneath the window. Isabel's voice was heard, and ere I awakened to full consciousness I had listened to words that fastened me there like a spell.

"Cousin Harry," she was saying, "you do not know Lizzie. You do not know how I have mourned over this lightness of spirit—there is no depth of feeling in her heart—and educated among such good, plain persons, do you blame me that I was surprised and indignant to find such mercenary feelings were her motives?"

I had unconsciously thrown myself further forward. I could see Isabel, as she stood in the moonlight. I could see also, upturned to me, the agonized features of her sister's lover. They were deadly pale, and the agony pictured there would have moved a heart of stone. But again I heard Isabel's clear, measured tones; and I caught the flash of her dark eyes, as she pressed closer to his side.

"You ask me for proofs. Do you think I would have dared to destroy your happiness—that I would have torn away the veil from your idol on a slight suspicion? No—here is an unanswerable proof," and she placed a letter in his hand.

"It was written to a cousin, and I found it," continued Isabel, "on her desk. See how she dwells with rapture on the advantages of her situation as the wife of Henry Eldron—with what levity, what girlish frivolity she speaks of silks and laces, diamonds, and all the trappings that she seemingly despises. Is not this enough? Is this the kind, pure, trusting love that could meet with your's as a kindred spirit? Is this what your heart pines after?"

I heard a groan, almost a sob, and Eldron leaned against a tree for support. There was indignation and horror striving in his countenance—indignation that any one should dare to speak thus, and to him of one so dearly loved, one whose image he had jealously enshrined in his heart as all that was good and pure—horror as proof after proof came up before him. His voice was low, and so changed that I started.

"Why do you speak thus of your sister?" he said. "What am I to you, that you should sacrifice sisterly affection, and trample on every natural feeling for my sake? Why have you not told me of this before? Answer me," he added, sternly, as he gazed in her face, "and you will rue this if it is not true."

But Isabel's courage did not forsake her. Her look was at first indignant; then, as though moved by pity, it became more earnest; and her voice fell to a whisper.

"What is my sister to me?" she replied. "We knew nothing of each other until now. We cared nothing. We were separated, taught to think of each other as strangers. But you—I have spent my life with you. You have been more than brother. Years of kindness and attention have strengthened a friendship that far exceeds love for my sister. Say—is it not natural? Could I hesitate to sacrifice a sister that cares nothing for me, to a kind, generous brother, and that too when I had virtue and truth to uphold me?"

I could not bear to look upon his face. I heard the murmured words, "I will see her." There were hasty steps on the walk, and I heard Isabel's pleading voice. "Promise me not to reveal my part in this," and then as though to lull every suspicion she added,

"how could I bear her reproaches, her anger," and I heard him promise.

All was lost, and yet I could not move. I stood idly there. Oh, that paralyzed feeling of the soul, that inability to act when the heart is chilled and the brain on fire! I could not rouse myself. I heard steps in the room, the spell was broken. It was but the work of a moment to step on the balcony, to rush down the stairs, and to possess myself of the letter flung upon the dewy grass and forgotten. Then flashed upon me all the power, the subtlety of that woman. Had I not known Lizzie from childhood, had I not tested the principles and purity of her mind, even I should have been shaken at the proof of that letter. It was Lizzie's own writing apparently. I could detect no imitation, and with a scream that came unconsciously from my aching heart, I turned again to the crowd. Lizzie was gone, and I trembled and drew back at Isabel's voice and touch, as though she had been a serpent.

We hastened home. Lizzie was not there, and I could only sit down and wait with a beating heart. I had remained but a few moments when there were footsteps on the stairway, the door was opened, and there stood Lizzie. How changed! She leaned against the door for assistance. The color had left her cheeks, her eyes were dilated and wild with horror. In that countenance I read all. I sprang to her side, but she pushed me back, and putting her hand to her head fell helplessly forward with a scream I shall never forget. All was confusion. We placed her beside the open window, and in agony awaited her return to life. There we stood, and she, the destroyer, was among us! Her white lips were apart, and the breath came gaspingly as if there was a weight on her heart. Oh! the wild look of her eyes haunts me now.

The tempter was in my heart, and my first impulse was to accuse Isabel of her crime; but my eyes fell on the lifeless, sweet face of my cousin, and I felt this was no time for accusation. Hours passed on, and when daylight came dimly in through the half closed curtains, cousin Lizzie's eyes languidly opened, and there was a hope that she would yet live. I was at her side, and the sad sweetness of her smile nearly broke my heart, for I felt she would not be with us long. Isabel had stolen away from the window, and I could hear her sobs. She did not dare to approach her wronged sister, and when she raised her head, years seemed to have passed over it since the evening before. Retribution had commenced.

When we were alone, Lizzie's lips moved feebly, and she endeavored to tell me all; but I placed my finger on her lips, and to soothe her lay down beside her. But I could not control her, and she would speak. She told me of harsh words he had spoken, of his reproaches that she loved him only for his wealth, that he was to depart from her never to return.

"And oh! Ellen," she said, "he cursed me for my duplicity, said that I had embittered his life forever, and I—I stood like one in a dream—I could not comprehend that he was speaking thus to me. What, Ellen, have I done, except to love him too well? Tell me, Ellen, is it not a horrid dream, and will it

not pass away?" and she thinned her fingers among my hair, and smiled so vacantly that I trembled.

What could I do but fold her to my heart, whisper words of comfort, and say "it would all be well," although my heart misgave me. The truth would have killed her, and I yet hoped the deceived lover would return. No one had thought of him through the long, dark night, but at early dawn I had sent for him to the city. I lulled her to rest, and she finally slept on my arm like a wearied, troubled child. Can you imagine my feelings at that hour? There lay the once gay, happy Lizzie, a broken and crushed spirit. She was still in her evening dress. Even the wreath had not been removed, and the buds lay drooping and faded in her hair, fit emblem of the wearer! The delicate dress was soiled and torn, and the pearls on her throat and arms lay scattered on the rich covering around her. All this served to render that sad beauty still more sad. Some one entered, I dared not look up, I heard the words, "Mr. Eldron had left for Europe." There was no scream, no word from the broken-hearted girl beside me; but by the sudden paleness of her face, by the trembling of her form from the agony within, I knew she had heard all. She knew that all was lost. I could only wait patiently and see the young flower fade before my eyes.

Her first words were feeble as a child's.

"Let us go home, Ellen," she said. And oh! how gladly I obeyed. Would that I had never left it.

We were at home. It was a beautiful summer day. The glad sunshine came in through the open window, and danced on the leaves of the white rose tree before the porch. We could hear the bees humming amid the flowers, and the singing of the birds, so still was that little group within! There was my mother with the Holy volume before her, and the blessed words stole forth to the young sufferer. Tears were falling on the Holy Book—yes, my mother's voice was firm, for her trust was in Heaven. Our father, sisters, and brothers were there, hushed and silent before the presence of death.

I could not even shed a tear as I gazed on that angelic face, pale in approaching dissolution. Calmly the air stole in, and so calmly rose her voice, one would have thought it the whispering of the breeze. I bent over to hear her last words.

"Tell *Harry*," she said, "that I died true to him, and that I knew all would be known in Heaven. I know he will come for me soon, and when his grief is hard to bear, cheer and support him. Tell him how I loved him, that there was not one reproach, or unkind thought in my heart."

There was a sound of carriage wheels on the road, a sudden shutting of the garden gate, hasty footsteps on the walk, and dusty and weary Isabel stood before us! Her step was eager, and she sprang into the room excited and trembling. But even she caught the spirit of the scene. No words of welcome were given to her, no smile of recognition, and the guilty girl stole away to the bedside and knelt beside her sister.

Lizzie meantime had become unconscious of things around her. She had heard no steps, nor even the new comer. Her voice grew louder and more clear,

and as though she was communing with herself, she added—

“I know there has been some mistake, a veil has fallen over his eyes, but all will be made clear, and he will revere my memory if nothing more.”

She spoke so beautifully of their brief, bright dream of happiness, and of the greater happiness when he should rejoin her, that we were all melted to tears. There was no doubt or mistrust in her heart. Peace rested on her face, and blessed her words.

Isabel's sobs had ceased. She had risen to her feet and stood before us. She looked at no one. That wild light was again in her eye, and her lips trembled. I knew the spirit could not rest.

“I did it all, Lizzie,” she almost screamed. “It was I. I—I loved him more than life, I loved him

long before I saw you, and I had hoped he would yet be mine. I told him you loved but his wealth, I wrote false letters, I arrayed even his pride, his love against you. I had hoped to win him to myself, but—my God—I forgot there was no happiness for the wicked. Curse me not, my sister, curse me not, for I am already cursed. It would be happiness to die, but I must live with this weight upon my soul. Let me not go to my grave with your hatred!” and she fell helplessly forward beside her sister.

The peace of God had rested on the spirit of my cousin. Earth and earthly things could not call back the mind to their tumult and agony. She heard, but comprehended not, and with her hand lying tenderly on her sister's head, she went from us to her rest in Heaven.

THE GAMBLER.

BY THE LATE WILLIS GAYLORD CLARK.

"Such was the cause that turned so many off
Rebelliously from God, and led them on
From vain to vainer still, in endless chase.
And such the cause that made so many cheeks
Pale, and so many knees to shake."—COURSE OF TIME.

ONE stormy evening, in the month of October, 1819, I was descending the little hill that wound its circuitous path into my native village. The drapery of the declining year was hung upon the woodlands, and the blast rustled among the poplars on either side of the way, with a boding and melancholy sound. The thoughts of my mind were colored by the aspect of the scene around me; and I grew pensive and abstracted.

Never does the thought of man's dissolution, and a foretaste of the world to come, press so intently upon the mind as in the autumn season. It is not, perhaps, difficult to account for the coming on of these reflections; in as much as the decay of nature speaks forcibly and audibly to the heart of man—reminding him of his own frail nature, and expressing in its mute eloquence what the Scripture has recorded for the eye and heart. "We do all fade as a leaf:—Man cometh forth like a flower and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not."

Like many villages in the country, my native town extended two or three miles; the houses were not joined together, but each domicile was surrounded with a capacious garden well stocked with fruit trees; so that the vale presented the aspect of a continuous row of farm-houses. The village green was held sacred; and the tall spire awoke a pleasant music on a Sabbath morn, as the well-dressed inhabitants hastened across the lawn to the house of prayer.

Among the young men who had been my companions in youth, and my fellow travellers in manhood, was Charles Everts. He was handsome and accomplished: had received a fine education; and on the death of his father, a wealthy merchant, succeeded to his estate, and began life at twenty-one, with all the prospects of success that could gather around the path of any pilgrim on earth. His affections were ardently devoted to Juliette Howard, the daughter of the village clergyman: a fair girl, who inherited a beauty from her mother, little short of angelic; and whose heart was the sanctuary of the purest principles, and the most ennobling virtue.

During the last year of his stay at college, where he only went to receive the benefits of education, without the design of applying it to a profession, Charles unfortunately contracted a habit of gaming. On his return he abandoned it for awhile, and then pursued it covertly, "just," as he said, "to kill the

time of an evening—make a little money, and feel a pleasant excitement." By degrees he became more involved; and determined on moving to another village on the sea-shore, a few miles distant, where trade was more brisk and profits more lucrative. He was still, notwithstanding his losses, in good business. He sold his house and store, both with the proviso that he was to occupy them until the ensuing spring. He then disposed of his goods by auction, and went to purchase a large stock in one of the great commercial cities. A part of this stock it was his design to dispose of during the winter; and in the beginning of the ensuing year, to open with a great display in his new residence.

On the evening mentioned in the beginning of this tale, I stopped to rest my jaded horse, for a few moments, at the village inn, as well as to get my newspaper from the city, for the village post-office was in the inn.

While I was seated by the stove, the stage from the East drove up to the door, and Charles Everts entered the bar-room. His looks were care-worn and haggard. He gazed at me for a moment without recognition: stalked up to the bar and demanded a glass of brandy. I accosted him, but he stared at me with a vacant look; and asked the bar-keeper for a private room.

He had scarcely closed the door before we heard the report of a pistol. We entered the room. He had committed suicide. The purple current of life was ebbing from his mouth, and the paleness of death was on his brow. In his hand was clasped a scrap of paper—it contained a statement of the loss of his whole property in money, at a gaming-table in New York. Not a penny was saved; and he was indebted to the kindness of the blacklegs who robbed him, for the money which brought him home to die by his own hand!

Who shall describe the terror, the agony of his kind, lovely wife, with her lovely boy? Why should it be described when they both are at rest in the grave? But shall not a voice as of a trumpet arise from the tombs of the victims of gaming, and say, "turn ye at my reproach? Awake from the spell of destruction before thy earthly hopes are blasted, thou gamester. Awake, before despair shall drive thee to that sleep, whose resurrection is uncheered by the sunbeams of hope!"

MY FIRST SCHOOL MISTRESS.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

"He hung his head—each noble aim,
And hope and feeling which had slept
From boyhood's hour, that instant came
Fresh o'er him, and he wept—he wept!
Blest tears of soul-felt penitence,
In whose benign, redeeming flow,
Is felt the first, the only sense
Of guiltless joy that guilt can know."

I COULD not have been more than six years of age when she died, and yet I remember my first school-mistress as distinctly as the faces that passed before me an hour since. She was a quiet, gentle creature, that won the love of every living thing that looked upon her. In repose, her face was sad, sweet, and full of thought, but not handsome; though, when lighted up by a smile, it seemed beautiful as an angel's. I was a mere child, but my heart yearned toward her with clinging tenderness whenever she bent those large, loving eyes on my face, as if she had been my own mother, or a dear, elder sister. When she laid her small hand on my hair, and praised my work, her low voice would send a thrill of strange pleasure through my veins, and I returned her care with a love that lingers round my heart even yet, though years have swept over her grave, and her name is almost forgotten.

Miss Bishop had not been among us a fortnight, before we knew that she was unhappy. The color on her delicate cheek was unsteady, and sometimes far, far too brilliant. There were times when she would sit and gaze through the window into the grave-yard, with her large, melancholy eyes surcharged with a strange light, as if she were pondering on the time when she, also, might lie down in the cold earth and be at rest. She was not gloomy—far from it; at times she was gay and child-like as ourselves. On a rainy day, when the grass was wet, and we were obliged to find amusement within doors, I have known her to join in our little games with a mirth as free as that which gushed up from the lightest heart among us. At such times, she would sing to us by the hour together, till the galleries of the old church seemed alive with bird music. But her cheerfulness was not constant; it seemed to arise more from principle and a strong resolution to overcome sorrow, than from a spontaneous impulse of the heart.

It is strange what fancies will sometimes enter the minds of children—how quick they are to perceive, and how just are the deductions they will often draw from slight premises. It was not long before the sorrow which evidently hung over our young mistress, became a subject of speculation and comment in our play-hours. One morning she came to the house rather later than usual. We were all gathered about the door to receive her; and when she waved her hand in token that we should take our places, there

was a cheerful strife which should obey the signal first. Never do I remember her so beautiful as on that morning. The clear snow of her forehead, and that portion of her slender neck, exposed by her high dress, mingled in delicate contrast with the damask brightness on her cheek and lips. An expression of contentment, subdued the sometimes painful brilliancy of her eyes, and with a beautiful smile, beaming over that face in thanks for the offering, she took a half-open white rose, with a faint blush slumbering in its core, from the hand of a little girl, and twined it among her hair, just over the left temple, before taking her seat. The morning was warm, and all the doors had been left open to admit a free circulation of air through the old building. My seat was near the pulpit, directly opposite the Northern door, which commanded a view of the highway. I was gazing idly at the sunshine which lighted up a portion of the lawn in beautiful contrast with the thick grass which still lay in the shade, glittering with rain-drops—for there had been a shower during the night—when a strange horseman appeared, galloping along the road. He checked his horse, and after surveying the old meeting-house a moment, turned into the footpath leading to the Southern door.

Seldom have I seen a more lofty carriage or imposing person, than that of the stranger as he rode slowly across the lawn. His face, at a first view appeared eminently handsome; but on a second perusal, a close observer might have detected something daring and impetuous, which would have taught him to suspect impudence, if not want of principle in the possessor. He was mounted on a noble horse, and his dress, though carelessly worn, was both rich and elegant. He had ridden close to the door, and was dismounting, when Miss Bishop looked up. A slight cry burst from her lips, and starting from her seat, she turned wildly toward the side door as if meditating an escape; but the stranger had scarcely set his foot within the building, when she moved down the aisle, though her face was deadly pale, and there was a look of mingled terror and grief in her eyes. The stranger advanced to meet her with a quick, eager step, and put forth his hand. At first she seemed about to reject it, and when she did extend hers, it was tremblingly and with evident reluctance. He retained her hand in his, and bent forward, as if about to salute her. She shrunk back, shuddering

beneath his gaze; and we could see that deep crimson flush dart over her cheek like the shadow of a bird, flitting across the sun's disc. The stranger dropped her hand, and set his lips hard together, while she wrung her hands and uttered some words, it seemed, of entreaty. He looked hard in her face as she spoke, but without appearing to heed her appeal, he walked a few paces up the aisle, and taking off his hat, leaned heavily against a pew door which chanced to be open. His was a bold countenance! I have seldom looked on a forehead so massive and full of intellect. Yet the dark kindling eye, the haughty lip, bespoke an untamed will, and passions yet to be conquered, or to be deeply repented of in remorse and in tears. As he stood before that timid girl, she shrunk from, and yet seemed almost fascinated by the extraordinary power of expression that passed over his face. His dark eyes grew misty and melting with tenderness as he took her hand again, reverently between both his, and pleaded with her as one pleading for his last hope in life. We could not hear his words, but there was something in the deep tones of his voice, and in that air of mingled pride, energy and supplication, which few women could have resisted. But she did resist, though even a child might have seen that the effort was breaking her heart. Sadly, and in a voice full of suppressed agony and regret, she answered him, her small hands were clasped imploringly, and her sweet face was lifted to his with the expression of a tried spirit, beseeching the tempter to depart and leave her in peace.

Again he answered her, but now his voice trembled, and its deep tones were broken as they swelled through the hollow building. When he had done, she spoke again in the same tone as before, and with the expression of sad resolve unmoved from her face. He became angry at last; his eyes kindled, and his heavy forehead gathered in a frown. She had extended her hand, as if to take farewell; but he dashed it away, and, regardless of her timid voice, rushed toward the door.

Miss Bishop tottered up the aisle, and sunk to her chair, trembling all over, and drawing her breath in quick, painful gasps. We all started up, and were about to crowd around her with useless tears and lamentations, when the young man came up the aisle again. We shrunk back around the pulpit stairs, and watched his motions, like a flock of frightened birds when the hawk is hovering in the air above them.

"Mary," he said, bending over her chair, and speaking in a low, suppressed voice—for all traces of passion had disappeared from his face. "Mary, once again, and for the last time, I entreat you take back the cruel words you have spoken. They will be the ruin of us both—for, conceal it as you will, you cannot have forgotten the past. There *was* a time—"

"Do not speak of it, George Mason, if you would not break my heart here, and at once—do not—in mercy, arouse memories that never will sleep again!" said the poor girl, rising slowly to her feet, and wringing her hands, over which tear-drops fell like rain.

"Be calm, Mary, I beseech you. I will say nothing that ought to pain or terrify you thus—consent to fulfil

the engagement so cruelly broken off, and here, in this sacred place, I promise never to stand beside a gambling-table, or touch another card in my life. I know that in other things I have sinned against you, almost beyond forgiveness, but I will do anything, everything that you can dictate to atone for the wrongs done—that poor girl, and I will never, never see her again."

Miss Bishop looked up with a painful smile, and a faint color spread from her face, down over her neck and bosom.

"Can you take away the stain which has been selfishly flung on her pure spirit—can you gather up the affections of a young heart when once wickedly lavished, and teach them to bud and blossom in the bosom which sin has desolated? As well might you attempt to give its perfume back to the withered rose, or take away the stain from a bruised lily, when its urn has been broken and trampled in the dust. Vain man! Go and ask forgiveness of that God, whose most lovely work you have despoiled. With all your pride and wealth of intellect, you have no power to make atonement to that one human being, whom you have led into sin and sorrow."

She turned from him as the last words died on her lips, and covering her face, wept as one who had no comfort left. Tears stood in that proud man's eye, and his haughty lip trembled as he gazed upon her. He did not speak again, but lifted her hand reverently to his lips, and hastened away.

A week went by, and every day we could see that our "young mistress" walked more feebly up the lawn, and that the color in her cheek became painfully vivid. She had always been troubled with a slight cough, but now it often startled us with its frequency and hollowness. On Saturday, it had been her habit to give us some little proof of approbation—a certificate, sometimes neatly written, but more frequently ornamented by a tiny rose—a butterfly or grasshopper, from her own exquisite pencil. On the Saturday night in question, she had distributed her little gifts, and it chanced that a simple daisy, most beautifully colored, fell to me. I had long had a strange wish to possess a lock of her hair, and this night found courage to express it. As she extended the daisy for my acceptance, I drew close to her chair, and whispered, "if you please, Miss Bishop, I would much rather have some of your hair—that beautiful bright curl that always hangs back of your ear."

With a gentle smile, she took her scissors and cut off the curl which I had so long coveted. She seemed pleased with my eager expressions of delight, and holding up the ringlet allowed it to fall slowly down to my palm, in a succession of rich glossy rings. I had the daisy, too, and went home a proud and happy child.

The next Monday was a melancholy day to us all, for our mistress was ill—very ill. The doctor was afraid that she never would be well again. We sat down together as they told us this, and cried as if some great evil had fallen upon us. We saw her once again, but it was in the gloom of a death-chamber, and then she was in her old place again, there in

the broad aisle of the meeting-house, but a coffin was her resting-place, and when we gathered about her, weeping and full of sorrow, she did not hear the voice of her little scholars.

Our mistress was buried back of the old meeting-house, and very often would the children she loved so fondly, linger about her grave. It was a strange fancy, but I seldom visited the shady spot without taking with me the little work-bag which contained her presents, and that one precious ringlet—her last gift. I was never afraid to linger about the resting-places of the dead, and one evening the twilight had settled over me while I still sat by that meekly-made grave. All at once the sound of a heavy footstep startled me, and the shadow of a man fell athwart the grass. I knew him at once, though he was much paler than formerly, and there was an expression of suffering on his face that awoke all my childish sympathy. It was the same man who had visited our mistress on the week before she left us. He seemed surprised at finding a child so near her grave; but when he saw that I recognized him, began to question me about the departed. I told him all, and he wept

like a child, for my presence was no restraint upon him. After a time he took me in his arms, and asked if the departed had never given me any present—a picture-book or certificate which I would part with—he would give me a beautiful piece of gold for it. I thought of my precious ringlet, and there was a struggle in my young heart.

“Did you love our mistress?” I inquired, for it seemed wrong to give up the beautiful curl to any one who had not loved her as well as I had done.

“Love her—oh, God, did I not!” he exclaimed, covering his face and bursting into tears—such tears as can only be wrung from a strong, proud man.

“Don’t cry, don’t cry! I will give you the hair, I will indeed,” I exclaimed, eager to pacify him, for it seemed strange and unnatural to see a man weep. Taking the ringlet from my work-bag, I held it up in the moonlight. His tears were checked at the sight, and with a quick breath he took it from my hand. Another burst of grief swept over him, and then he became more calm. When he saw that I would not take the gold, he kissed my forehead, and led me forth from the grave of “my first school-mistress.”

THE TWO ACTS;

OR, "THEY HAVE THEIR REWARD."

BY HENRY G. LEE.

"No, indeed! I shall do no such thing," said Mrs. Lionel to her husband, who had come home with the intelligence that a cousin of his, a widow, had died suddenly, and left a little girl three years old, whom he proposed that his wife should adopt and raise as her own—they having no children. But she gave a decided negative on the spot.

"She is a sweet, interesting child," urged Mr. Lionel. "You will soon get attached to her, and be more than repaid in the new affection awakened in your heart, for all the care and trouble she may occasion."

"It is no use to talk to me, Mr. Lionel," returned the lady, in a positive tone of voice. "I know about the care and trouble, and am not willing to take it upon myself. As I have no children of my own, I am not disposed to take the burden of other people's. So it is useless for you to press this subject; for I will never consent to what you propose."

"If you feel that way, I shall certainly not urge the matter," said her husband. "Though, as far as I am concerned, it would give me great pleasure to adopt Aggy, who is a charming little creature. I wish you could see her."

"I have no particular desire. All children are alike to me. As to the beauty, that is a poor compensation for the trouble. So I must beg to be excused."

Mr. Lionel said no more on the subject. He was exceedingly fond of children, and never ceased to regret that he had none of his own. In two or three instances before, he had endeavored to prevail upon his wife to adopt a child, but she had, each time, firmly declined. She had very little affection for children herself, and was not willing to take the care and trouble that she saw would necessarily be involved in the adoption of a child. The little girl who, by the death of his cousin, had been left homeless and apparently friendless, was a sweet young creature, whom, to look upon was to love. Mr. Lionel had never seen her without a warming of his heart toward her, and a secret wish that she were his own instead of another's. The moment he heard of his cousin's death, he determined to adopt Agnes, or Aggy, as she was called, provided his wife were willing. But Mrs. Lionel was not willing. She was too selfish to love anything out of herself. A thought of the child's good—of giving a home to the homeless—of being a mother to the motherless—never crossed her mind. She only thought of the trouble the little orphan would give.

The insuperable difficulty in the way of adopting Aggy as his own, did not destroy the interest which Mr. Lionel felt in her. He considered it his duty to see that she was provided with a good home, and was willing to be at the cost of her maintenance, if necessary. His first thought had been to adopt the child, and until that was understood to be out of the question, he had thought of nothing else in regard to her. How she was to be disposed of, now that his wife had definitely settled the matter against him, became a new subject of reflection. After due deliberation, he concluded to see a distant relative on the subject, with whom, since his marriage, he had held but little familiar intercourse, although he had always entertained for her a high respect. The reason of this was, the cold, proud, unsocial temper of his wife, who rather looked down upon his relatives because their standing in society was not, as she considered it, quite as high as her's had been and still was. Necessarily, such a disposition in his wife, would prevent much social intercourse between Mr. Lionel and his relatives, notwithstanding his regard for them might continue as high as before his marriage.

The relative to whom reference has just been made, was a lady whose husband, a very estimable man, was in moderately good circumstances. They had three children of their own, the youngest of which was nearly ten years of age. From his high appreciation of Mrs. Wellford's character, Mr. Lionel, who, from thinking of Aggy as his adopted child, began to love her almost as much as if she were really his own, felt a strong desire that she should take the orphan. He had not seen her for a couple of years when he called upon her to talk about the orphan. A little to his surprise, Mrs. Wellford, when she met him in the parlor, entered, leading Aggy by the hand.

"Dear little creature!" he said, taking the child up in his arms, and kissing her as soon as he had shaken hands with Mrs. Wellford. "I am glad to see you in such good hands. It is about this very child, Marv," he added, "that I have come to talk with you. What is to be done with her?"

"I don't know," returned Mrs. Wellford. "She must have a home somewhere among us. The dear child! Anybody could love her. Have you thought of taking her?"

"If I were to consult my own feelings and wishes, I should adopt her as my own child immediately. But I am not at liberty to do this, and, therefore, must not think about it. I am willing, however, to be at

the entire cost of her maintenance and education, if you will undertake the care of her. What I can do, I will do with all my heart."

"We have already talked, seriously, about adding Aggy to our little household," replied Mrs. Wellford. "And if no one else offers to do so, we will keep her and do for her the same as if she were our own. It will bring more care and anxiety for me, which, as my health is not good, will be felt; but if not better provided for, it will be my duty to take the place of her mother, and I will assume the office cheerfully."

"But at my charge," said Mr. Lionel.

"No," replied Mrs. Wellford. "A mother accepts no pay for her duty. It is a labor of love and brings its own sweet reward. Though Providence has not given us wealth, yet we have enough, and, I think, as much to spare as this dear child will need. For your kind wishes and intentions for Aggy, I will thank you, in her stead. I thought, perhaps, as you had no children, that you might wish to adopt her; but, as this cannot be, it will doubtless fall to our lot."

Mr. Lionel went home, feeling less satisfied with his wife's spirit and temper, so strongly contrasted, as it was, with that of Mrs. Wellford, than he had felt for a long time.

"She will have her reward," he murmured to himself, "and, as she said, justly, it will be sweet." This was in allusion to Mrs. Wellford, who had called the mother's duty she was about assuming, a labor of love.

Little Aggy scarcely felt the loss of her parent. The love she had borne her mother, was transferred to her aunt, as Mrs. Wellford was called, so early that no void was left in her heart. It took but a little while, for each member of the family to feel that Aggy had a right to be among them, and for Mr. and Mrs. Wellford to love her as their own child.

Years rolled by, and brought them many unlooked for changes both to Mrs. Lionel and Mrs. Wellford. Both had been subjected to afflictions and reverses—the severest, perhaps, that ordinarily, fall to the lot of any—for both were widows and both friendless and poor. As for Mrs. Wellford, she had not only lost her husband, but all her children were taken, and she was left alone in the world with the orphan Aggy. But she, grown into a lovely young woman, nestled closer to her side, and into her very bosom; though not with a helpless, but in a sustaining spirit. Death, though he had robbed her of much, had still left her much. Bereaved as she had been, she was neither lonely nor sad. How different was the case of Mrs. Lionel! After the death of her husband, and the total loss of her property, she fell back at once from her advanced position in the social rank, into neglect, obscurity and want. For the very means of subsistence, exertion became necessary. But what could she do for a living, who had, in her whole life, done scarcely a useful thing—who had been little better than a drone in the social hive? Nothing! Or, if there was small ability, there was pride enough remaining to prevent its exercise.

After her husband's death, which followed shortly after the reverses that stripped him of all worldly possessions, Mrs. Lionel retired into the family of a poor relative, who had been little thought of in brighter

days, and who, although she did not want to receive her, could not close her door in her face. A sad spectacle she was. Shut up in the little chamber that was assigned her, she never went out, and only met the family she was burdening with her presence, at the table, and then with an aspect so gloomy and reserved, as to throw a chill over the feelings of all.

For a short period, Mrs. Lionel paid a small sum for her boarding, but no very long time passed before all her money was exhausted, and she became absolutely dependent upon a poor woman, very distantly related to her, whose only means of support was her personal labor and that of her daughter.

After the death of her husband and children, Mrs. Wellford, who was left quite as poor as Mrs. Lionel, began to look around her for some means of securing an income for herself and Agnes, whom she loved, now that all the rest were gone, with a tenderness that equalled the sum of her love for all. But, what to do, was a difficult thing to determine. As a young girl her education had been very plain. She could not, therefore, resort to teaching in any branch, for she had not the requisite ability. Sewing always gave her a severe pain in the breast and side, so that, whatever might be her skill in needle work, she was precluded from resorting to it as a means of obtaining money.

"I think," she said to Agnes, after looking at the subject in every possible light, "that there is but one thing left for me to do."

"What is that, aunt?" inquired Agnes.

"Taking a few boarders. I could attend to them."

"It will be very hard work," suggested the niece, "too hard for you. No—no, aunt, that will not do. Look what a slave's life Mrs. Minturn has! Don't think of it."

"I must do something, you know, Aggy, dear. In a little while all our money will be gone. I have thought of everything, but my mind comes back to this at last. I don't like the thought of it, but it is right for me to exert myself, and I must do so without a murmur."

"Haven't you yet thought of anything that I can do?" asked Agnes, in a cheerful voice. "I am sure that I can do something," she added, confidently, "and I am younger, and have better health than you have."

"I cannot think, my dear child," Mrs. Wellford said, with much tenderness in her voice, "of your being exposed to the world's rough contact. You are too young."

"The contact you seem so to dread, cannot hurt me, aunt," returned Agnes. "To the pure all things are pure. If I have in me a right spirit, the world cannot hurt me."

"But I cannot bear the thought of seeing you, in the very spring time of life, when all along your path should grow up flowers to fill the air with perfume, chained like a slave to the car of labor. No, no, Aggy; it must not be! I can do all that is required. If I fail, then it will be time enough for me to call upon you for aid."

Pride as well as affection reigned in the breast of Mrs. Wellford. She could not bear the thought of

seeing Agnes engaged in any kind of labor for money. She was fully capable of giving instruction in many things, and of securing, thereby, a fair income; but her aunt would not hear of her seeking for employment.

"Aunt is wrong," Agnes said to herself, when alone, soon after the interview in which Mrs. Wellford declared it as her belief that the only thing left for her to do, was to take a few boarders. "I ought not to see her do this." She sat thoughtful for a few moments, and then added aloud—"and I will not see her do it. I have received everything from her, and now is the time for me to make some return. But what shall I do? Where shall I seek for employment?"

Half an hour after she had asked herself these questions so earnestly, Agnes picked up a newspaper, and the first thing that met her eyes was an advertisement for a person to give lessons in music, and one or two modern languages to three young ladies, for which a liberal compensation would be paid. Without saying a word to her aunt, Agnes put on her things and went to the place mentioned in the advertisement. The house before which she paused was a very large one, in a fashionable part of the city. Everything around it indicated a wealthy owner. For a few moments she felt timid, and hesitated about presenting herself; but she soon regained her self-possession, and made the application for which she had come.

A middle aged woman, of mild and lady-like deportment, met her on being shown into one of the apartments of the house.

"I believe you advertised for a teacher?" said Agnes, speaking in a low, trembling voice. She found herself more agitated than she had expected.

"We did," replied the lady, "and have already received several applications; though none of those who have answered the advertisement, suit us in all respects. And I am afraid that we shall hardly find all that we desire in you."

There was nothing in the way this was said to hurt the feelings of Agnes, but rather to make her feel more free to speak.

"Why do you think I will not suit?" she asked, looking earnestly into the lady's face.

"Because you are too young. You cannot be over seventeen years of age."

"I am nineteen," returned Agnes.

"But even that is young. We wish a person of some experience, and of the first ability. I will not question your ability, but you certainly cannot have much experience in teaching. Have you ever given lessons in music?"

"Not yet; but I wish to do so, and believe that I could give satisfaction."

"Then you have never been engaged in teaching at all?"

"No—never."

"I hardly think you would suit us."

The countenance of Agnes fell so suddenly that the lady's sympathies were awakened, and she said—

"Are you very desirous of securing a situation as teacher?"

"Desirous above all things," replied Agnes, with much earnestness.

The lady continued to ask question after question, until she understood fully what was in the young girl's mind. She then appreciated her more highly, although she did not believe her fully qualified to give the instruction that was desired. Agnes, who gained confidence the more she conversed with the lady, at length urged that she might have a trial.

"But suppose, after we give you a trial, that you do not suit us. We shall find it hard to send you away."

The force of this objection was fully appreciated by the lady when she uttered it, for already she felt so drawn toward the young girl with whom she was holding the interview, that her feelings were fast getting the control of her judgment.

"I am sure I will suit you," replied Agnes, "for I will give the most untiring attention to my duties."

The lady looked at her beautiful young face, lit up with the earnestness of a true purpose, and felt as she had never before felt for a stranger. She addressed her a few words in French, to which Agnes replied in the same language.

"Your accent is certainly very correct. Now let me hear you perform something on the piano," she said.

Agnes went to the instrument, and after selecting a piece of music, sat down and ran her fingers gracefully over the keys. The lady stood by to listen. Soon the young girl was in the midst of one of Hertz's most beautiful but familiar compositions, which she executed with unusual taste as well as brilliancy. Her touch was exquisite, and at the same time full, and, where required, bold and confident.

"Admirable!" she heard uttered in a low voice, just behind her, as she struck the last note in the piece. It was not the voice of a woman.

She started up and turned quickly. More auditors than she had supposed were present. A young man, and three beautiful young girls stood listening behind their mother. They had been attracted from an adjoining room by the music, so far superior to anything ordinarily heard. A deep crimson overspread the sweet young face of Agnes, heightening every native charm. The young man instantly retired, and the mother introduced her to her daughters, who were in love with so lovely an instructress, and threw their voices at once in her favor. These voices but seconded the mother's prepossessions.

"Nothing has yet been said about compensation," remarked the lady to Agnes, after she had requested the girls to leave them again alone. "We are willing to pay liberally if we can get the person we want. At present, I feel strongly in favor of giving you a trial. If after thinking over the subject, it is concluded to do so, your salary will be four hundred dollars. Do you think that will meet your wishes?"

"Fully," replied Agnes, with an emotion that she could scarcely conceal. The sum was larger than she had expected.

"Of course, I would like to be at home every night with my aunt," she said.

"To that we should make no objection. To-morrow morning I will be prepared to give you an answer."

Agnes retired with a heart full of hope, yet trembling lest something should prevent the engagement she was

so eager to make. She said nothing to her aunt, who, bent on taking boarders, started out on the ensuing morning to look for a house suited for that purpose. As soon as she was gone, Agnes went with a trembling heart to hear the decision that was to be made in favor or against her application. It was favorable!

On going home, she found that her aunt had not yet returned, nor did she come back for two hours. Then she was so worn down with fatigue that she had to go to bed. A cup of tea revived her; but her head ached so badly that she did not get up until late in the afternoon, when she was better.

"I have found a house, Aggy," she said, as soon as she felt like alluding to the subject, "that will just suit. The owner is to give me an answer about it to-morrow."

"If looking for a house has made you sick enough to go to bed, aunt," returned Agnes, "how can you expect to hear the fatigue of keeping boarders in the house after you have taken it? You must not think of it. In two good rooms, at a light rent, we can live very comfortably, and at an expense much lighter than we have at present to bear."

"Yes, Agnes, comfortably enough, if we had the ability to meet that expense. But we have not. You know that there is no income."

"There has been none—but——"

"But what, dear?" Mrs. Wellford saw that there was something more than usual in the mind of Agnes.

"Forgive me, dear aunt," said the affectionate girl, throwing her arms around the neck of her relative; "but I cannot see you, at your time of life and in ill health, compelled to toil as you propose. I have, therefore, applied for, and secured a situation in a private family as a teacher of music and languages to three young ladies, for which I am to receive a salary of four hundred dollars a year."

While Mrs. Wellford was looking for a house, and after she had found one, the fatigue and pain she suffered led her more fully to realize, than she had done before, the great labor with a doubtful result, that she was taking upon herself. She was, therefore, just in

the state of mind to receive the unexpected communication made by Agnes.

"You are a good girl," she merely replied, kissing her as she spoke.

"And you do not object?" eagerly asked the niece.

"How can I?" responded Mrs. Wellford, leaning her head down upon the shoulder of Agnes. In a few moments, she said, as she looked up, with tears glittering on her eyelashes—"may Heaven reward you!" And turning away, she left Agnes to her own happy thoughts.

Six months from this time, as Mrs. Lionel sat alone in her room, gloomy and sad, the woman with whom she was living, and upon whom she still laid herself, a heavy burden, came in where she was, and said—

"Did you know that your niece, Agnes Wellford, was married, yesterday, to the son of one of the richest men in town."

"No! It can't be!" quickly replied Mrs. Lionel. "Mr. Wellford died not worth a dollar, and his widow has been as poor as poverty ever since."

"No, not quite that," said the woman. "Agnes has supported her comfortably by teaching music. I heard the whole story this morning. Mrs. Wellford wanted to keep boarders, but Agnes wouldn't hear to it, and, against her aunt's wishes, went out and applied for a place as teacher to three young ladies in a wealthy family, for which she received a salary of four hundred dollars a year. She had not taught long before the brother of the young ladies fell in love with her, to which no very strong objection was made by his friends. And now they are married."

"And what of Mrs. Wellford?" was eagerly inquired.

"They go to housekeeping forthwith, and Mrs. Wellford is to live with them."

Mrs. Lionel clasped her hands together, and sinking back in her chair, exclaimed—

"Oh! what an error I committed!"

"How?" inquired the woman.

But Mrs. Lionel did not answer the question.

She had *her* reward, and Mrs. Wellford had *hers*.

THE FIVE DOLLAR BILL.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

NO. I.—THE HARD LANDLORD.

BY HARRY SUNDERLAND.

I HAVE seen hard service, and am, in consequence, much worn and faded. Were I to relate all I have witnessed in my passage through life, the story would fill volumes, and make one of the most interesting and instructive histories that ever was written; and this service I may one day render to mankind, unless unfitted for the task by the feebleness of old age that I perceive already beginning to steal upon me. At present I only intend jotting down, in a loose manner, the incidents of a single week; premising that I belong to a respectable family; am a lover of truth, and bear upon my face no promise that will not be fully paid on demand.

I had slept snugly in the pocket-book of a certain individual well known in the good city of Brotherly Love, for about a month, in company with a large number of my relatives, some near of kin, and others so remote that I had not before even heard of their existence. We had a pleasant time, and spent the greater portion of it in comparing notes.

One morning, an individual whose voice I had often heard during the month of repose, came into my owner's office and said, in a hesitating and humble way—

"I am sorry to trouble you so often; but necessity compels me to be urgent. If you will settle my bill to-day you will confer a great favor."

At least a dozen times had I heard the same request in the same voice, and the reply had been—

"I can't attend to you to-day," or

"I've no money to spare," or

"Call some other time," or

"Don't come here with your bill so often. I'll pay it before long."

On the present occasion, there was something in the face or tones of the applicant that my owner could not resist, for he put his hand reluctantly into his pocket, and drawing out his distended wallet, in which I lay, said, in a very unpleasant and insulting manner—

"You're the most troublesome person about your bills of any that I have dealings with. I'll take good care not to make any more with you. Here, write a receipt."

While saying this, he was turning over bill after bill. At last, selecting me, and looking at me for some moments, as if he hated to give me up, he threw me upon the table where the man sat writing.

"There!" he uttered petulently, and folding up his wallet, thrust it back into his pocket.

I must own that I was no little surprised at finding

myself adequate to the discharge of a bill for which the man had been asking at least a month, and the payment of which had frequently been denied on the ground of want of funds, while I lay snugly in the debtor's pocket in company with twenty or thirty relatives, some with a value four times that attached to me.

I looked with some interest at the man who had now become my possessor. A glance told me that he was in humble circumstances. His dress was mean, and his face had a care worn expression. I have been a great deal among the poor, and know a really poor man at the first glance. Not all are poor whose dress is common. Some who dress well know more of the real stings of poverty than some whose appearance display far less of taste and comfort. The countenance generally gives the true index.

The man took me up quickly, and after a hurried glance at my face, crushed me up in his hard, horny-like hand, and saying with a bow—

"Thank you, sir," which was merely answered by a grunt, turned away and departed. He did not linger by the way, nor release the vice-like grip with which he had clutched me. A walk of about ten minutes brought him to a small shop, which he entered. A pale-faced girl stood leaning upon the counter. She turned her eyes upon the man, as he came in. Hope and fear were blended in the expression of her countenance.

"There," said the man, "is your money." And he opened the door of the prison where I lay, unfolded me, and gave me to the girl. "I am sorry," he added, "that I could not give it to you before, for I know you need it. I wish all who owe me were as willing to pay as I am."

A smile lighted up the wan face of the girl, as she took the money, and said—

"I would not have asked you for it so often; but you know—"

"Oh, yes, I know as well as you do," replied the man, in a kind voice, "that every dollar you earn is needed before your work is done; and it has grieved me that I could not pay you sooner. But, when people who owe me, wont pay, how can I pay? Ah, me!" and he sighed—"ah, me! If those who have plenty would only consider those who have to depend for daily bread upon their daily labor, it would be better for the world, I'm thinking. The man who owes a dollar, and keeps a dollar lying idle in his pocket, I don't call an honest man at heart."

The girl took out a purse, and after carefully folding me up with her thin, delicate fingers, placed me therein. My companions I found were a small silver coin of the lowest denomination, and a penny. I felt a strong desire to know more of this young girl, in whose face there was an expression of suffering, blended with patience, though little of hope in this world; but I was disappointed. After leaving the shop of the man from whom she had received me, she walked for some distance; then entering a store, she purchased several articles of food, and handing me over the counter, desired that the two dollars her mother owed, and also the price of the things just bought, might be taken out. I was laid in the grocer's drawer, from which a dollar and a half were taken and given in change, and then the girl left. While I lay thinking about her, and pitying the condition of the poor and friendless, the till in which I had been deposited was opened and I was again passed to a new owner, who placed me in his pocket-book, after a glance at my face, which gave me an opportunity to look at him. There was nothing particularly remarkable in his countenance, nor in his appearance. I had seen many better looking men, but the outside is not always a true exponent of what is within.

All day I reposed in this man's pocket. Toward evening he went home to his family, which I found to consist of his wife and two daughters. The girls were just verging into woman's estate. After tea, they drew around a centre-table, and one of the girls read for an hour. Then they talked for awhile about the book, after which the conversation took a more varied turn.

"Didn't I see you passing along Pine street to-day?" asked the father, in a pause, speaking to one of his daughters.

"I don't know," was replied.

"Were you in Pine street?"

"Yes, sir; about three o'clock. But where were you, if you saw me?"

"On my way into Southwark on business. I saw you crossing Fifth street some distance ahead of me. Where were you going?"

"To see old Mrs. Glendy about some plain sewing for mother. Poor woman! She seems very unhappy."

"Ah! What's the matter?"

"She told me that they found it very hard to get along. That her daughter's health was so poor that she couldn't work much over half of her time, and then was not able to get her money punctually. She said that, light as their rent was, they always found it difficult to lay by enough to meet it, and that their landlord troubled them with threats that made them very unhappy."

"That's bad, indeed," said the father. "Did she say how much they owed their landlord?"

"Two months rent, only, and that can't be much. I don't believe they pay over two or three dollars for the room they occupy."

I felt the hand of the man in whose pocket I was lying, fingering the little repository in which I had been snugly stowed. The conversation went on, and presently the pocket-book was drawn forth, and opened.

"I collected five dollars to-day from a man who didn't mean to pay me, I verily believe," said the father. "But, I happened to catch him with his till open, and a five dollar bill so plainly visible that there was no chance for him to make his usual statement of not having any money in the house. So he paid me with as good a grace as he could muster."

"Suppose we let this five dollar bill go into the old lady's hands. I reckon we can spare it. What do you all say? It's almost as good as picked up in the street, any how."

"Oh, let us do so by all means," said the wife.

And the daughters warmly seconded the proposal.

The pocket-book was opened, and I taken out and handed to one of the girls, who agreed to go on the next day and make glad the old lady's heart by transferring me into her keeping. In the meantime I was placed, quite tenderly, in the maiden's purse, where I lay snugly enough, all alone in my glory, until about ten o'clock on the next morning, when my fair possessor went forth on her errand of mercy.

An old woman, with many age-marks and care-lines upon her face, welcomed with a smile, meant to be cheerful, the angel of mercy who had come to visit her.

"Have you brought the work your ma was to cut out for me?" she asked, as she handed the young lady a chair.

"No," she replied, "mother will not have it ready before to-morrow. Then I will bring it, or else send it down by a servant."

"Very well," said the woman, a slight shade of disappointment in her voice. "I was in hopes you had brought it along, as I find myself idle to-day."

"Be thankful, then, for a day of rest, Mrs. Glendy," said the young lady. "You need it, I am sure."

"Rest, child!" replied the woman, with some bitterness. "That is what I can't afford to take, and it will do me little good to sit idle, and expect every instant our landlord's collector to come in for the rent."

"How much do you owe him?"

"Just five dollars. But Heaven only knows where it is to come from! We haven't over a dollar in the world. Ellen—poor child! she is more fit to be in bed than anywhere else—has gone out for work; but after she gets it and does it, there is no certainty when the money will come."

"Five dollars," remarked my fair possessor, and she put her hand upon her purse. I expected to be produced; but no; I was not disturbed in my quiet nook. "Who is your landlord?" she asked.

"Mr. —. He lives in Arch street."

"Oh, yes! I know who he is very well. Is it possible that he troubles you for so small an amount?"

"He! Yes, indeed! He's the closest landlord I ever had."

Just then the door opened, and the daughter entered. I was not a little surprised to find in her the poor young girl who had owned me for so short a period on the day before; but pleasure at the thought of being about to render her an important service, mingled with my surprise. The work for which she had gone was not ready, and she could not conceal her disappointment.

"Never mind," said the young lady in whose pocket I lay, "I will go directly home, and get mother to prepare the work she wants you to do, and send some of it down in the course of an hour."

She arose and left them, bearing with her many thanks for their kindness. I must own that I felt disappointed at her not handing me over; and making the heart of these poor people glad. Why she had not done this, I was at a loss to conjecture. She had certainly left home for that very purpose. I was not long, however, in doubt, for her quick feet were bent toward that part of the town where their landlord resided, and in a short space of time after leaving their humble abode, she was at the elegant residence of the man, who owned the comfortless house where they lived.

When the poor woman mentioned her landlord's name, I knew into what capacious pocket-book I was destined to be transferred; it was the same in which I had idly reposed for the last month. And here I soon found myself. Not a single one of my old companions were gone; but I found many strange faces among them.

"He's no poorer, certainly, by that transaction," I said to myself, as the leather folds closed around me, "and other hearts are lighter, and yet to be made lighter."

The old fellow didn't remember my face—notwithstanding he regarded me with the kind expression of a friend—but I knew him very well.

"Now for another long resting spell," I said.

THE NIGHT COMBAT.

BY CHARLES J. PETERSON.

"And now the storm blast came, and he
Was tyrannous and strong."—ANCIENT MARINER.

"SAIL, ho!" shouted the man at the mast-head, one sultry afternoon.

"Whereaway?" sung out the officer of the watch.

"Broad on the lee-beam."

"Can you make her out?"

"Her topsails just begin to lift—a merchantman."

"Ah!—how does she bear?"

"East by East South East."

"Dead toward us—do you think she sees us yet?"

"No, sir—we've but bare poles, and so had she till this moment, or I should have seen her sooner."

"Mast-head!" thundered Captain Drew, coming upon deck at the hail, and receiving the officer's report.

"Ay, ay, sir."

"Can you see her courses yet?"

"They just show, sir."

"Are you sure she's a merchantman, or a sloop of war?" said he, turning to me as I finished a long scrutiny at the stranger.

"A merchantman—and faith she's going off on the other tack. She sees us against this sunset sky."

"Ay—you're right—boatswain pipe all hands to make sail!"—and in five minutes we were careering down upon the chase.

It was a wild looking evening, and though the sun set clear, there was a ragged appearance in the clouds piled to Eastward, which I confess I did not like. The wind was rising fast, and had that sharp, whistling sound, which almost makes one shiver. The sea tossed uneasily, like some sickly monster—and at every pull in the gale crowds of tiny ripples rustled the billows.

We soon overhauled the stranger, and as we drew up across her quarter, discovered her to be a merchantman of the largest class, with a complement nearly equal to our own. As we set our ensign, and threw a shot across her forefoot, she ran up the British cross: at the same time, however, she kept crowding on all sail.

"Can you throw your iron into her yet?" said our superior to his gunner.

"We'll bark her at the word—shall I?"

"Ay—fire!"

The game was now fairly begun. The first ball from our piece brought down the foremast royals of the chase, and destroyed all hopes of escape. Instantly the merchantman luffed up into the wind, and running down toward us, with a boldness unusual in her craft, had no sooner come within range of her guns, than she manœuvred for a position to rake us,

without firing a shot, with a coolness which proved that her commander had seen service before. The gallantry of the act brought a cheer from our men, and edging away as the stranger luffed, we soon ran close upon her quarter, poured in our broadside, and creeping along her side, kept up a fire as unrelenting as I ever saw sustained. Nor did the stranger fail in return. Her crew worked with the fearlessness of brave men, jerking out their guns with the arms of giants, and exposing themselves with a recklessness that was astonishing out of the service. But our own men, like mettled hounds, only become the more eager in proportion as the defence increased, and proud to have found an equal, kept up a close, rolling, unrelenting fire, cheering lustily as some shot better aimed than the rest, went crashing against the foe. As the fight deepened, the excitement became overpowering. The shouts of the men; the quick roar of the guns; the tearing and splitting of the timbers; and the dull splash of the waters as a broken spar fell overboard, were all mingled in wild disorder. The night meanwhile settling down around, had buried us in a palpable darkness, only broken by the glare of the battle lanterns, and the blinding flash of the guns. The groans of the wounded, the rattle of musketry, and the occasional growling of the sullen ocean added to the wild interest of the scene. Even amid the tumult of the conflict I noticed that the wind had ceased as if by magic, and that a sudden, boding calm had succeeded, while momentarily a low, groaning sound seemed to rise out of the bosom of the deep, and die away in the distance in wailing tones.

Gradually the fire of the merchantman slackened; but the shouts of her crew gave warning that they were mustering in the fore-chains to board us. The measures of Captain Drew were promptly taken.

"Ahoy! boarders ahoy!—muster on the fore-castle all."

In another instant, with a loud cheer, we burst like a whirlwind upon the merchantman's deck. If the contest had before been terrific, it now defied description. Hand to hand and foot to foot the conflict was maintained; the steel cutlasses of the opponents flashed fire as they clashed; and though sullenly retiring before our impetuous charge, our foes yet struggled manfully, retreating shattered from the shock only to roll on again in more compact phalanx. It was no longer the conflict of opposing forces; it was the struggle of man with man.

Suddenly I heard the clear voice of our leader shouting from the quarter—

"The ship's our own."

The welcome shout was seconded by a huzza from our crew, which rose startlingly upon the night, ceased, rung out again, died away, and was prolonged the third time, until the welkin echoed and re-echoed the sound. Before a moment had elapsed the enemy were all driven below the hatches, and we remained undisturbed masters of the deck.

The events of the last few minutes, treading so rapidly upon each other, had withdrawn my attention from the horizon; but no sooner had the contest been decided, than I turned anxiously to the quarter whence the ominous sounds had proceeded. The sight that met my vision was one calculated to rouse every faculty. Not a breath of air was stirring. A stifled closeness pervaded the atmosphere. It seemed as if all nature had suddenly ceased to breathe. To the Eastward the sky was dark and gloomy as the gates of death; but away to the West, a long, lurid belt of light marked the outline of the horizon, as if the curtains of the night had been suddenly withdrawn, and a flood of sickly radiance let in upon the world. So well defined was this rapidly increasing streak of light, that we could almost see the feathery spray of the billows tossing against the sky. Suddenly a low growl, like stifled thunder, was heard far up to windward; then a hoarse, moaning sound rolled thrillingly down from the same quarter, dying away in prolonged notes; and after a boding silence of a minute, a low, rushing noise was heard, deepening as it approached—the sea to the West became suddenly as flat as a table—and anon! amid a roar as of a thousand tempests, and a sea of driving foam, the squall was seen careering down upon us. At such a crisis it was no time for hesitation. Springing into the main rigging, I thundered—

"A white squall—a white squall—away to your quarters, STORMS!—let the lee-quarter boat's crew only remain—for your lives away."

So deeply had all been occupied with their conquest, and so short a period had elapsed since we had mastered the prize, that my startling announcement was almost the first warning our brave fellows had of their danger. In an instant every voice was hushed, and all eyes turned instinctively toward the Western horizon. It was only for a moment. Captain Drew himself, though hitherto unapprized of the crisis, saw at a glance that my plan was the only chance of escape, and shouting to the crew, he sprang with the rapidity of thought from the quarter railings, making a fearful leap before he alighted in the main rigging of the Storm. After a momentary bewilderment the whole crew, with the exception of those I had named, followed his example. It was well they did. Already that hoarse, roaring sound was approaching nigher and nigher, and the surface of the ocean, as far as the eye could see, was a mist of driving spray. Not a second was to be lost. The squall was tearing down toward us, broad on the larboard beam, and the imminency of our situation called for the most gigantic efforts. The last man had scarcely sprung from the deck when I thundered again—

"Cast loose the grapnels."

"Ay, ay," was the answer, as we swerved gently

apart. But the dead calm that yet locked us in its arms, did not suffer us to separate more than a fathom or two. Our mutual positions threatened instant destruction should the squall strike us abeam.

"Furl everything—away all for your lives—in with every rag," roared the voice of my superior, above all the thunder of the tempest, as he stood in the lee shrouds of his vessel, his dark countenance glowing, and his form looming large and gigantic in the ghastly light.

The words had scarcely left his mouth before a score of seamen were seen mounting into the rigging of the schooner, and soon reduced her canvass until not a shred was seen against the lurid back-ground of the Western sky. My own crew had scarcely, however, reached the topmast cross-trees before, with a roar like that of an earthquake, the tempest was upon us.

"Look out—the squall is coming," I shouted, perceiving how hopeless it would be with my scanty complement to furl our sails, "loose and let run—cut with and cut all—down, down my men, in God's name down," and as they slid rapidly by the backstay to the deck, the fore-top-sail blew out of the bolt ropes with a report as of thunder, and streaming like a whiff of smoke ahead was seen the next moment flying far away to leeward amid clouds of mists; while instantaneously the tall spar cracked, snapped, went over the side, and the tempest striking us abaft the mainmast, heeled us over till our lee scuppers were buried a fathom in the surge, and the coppers of our weather side glanced brightly in the ghastly light. For an instant it seemed as if both conquered and conquerors were fated to the same destruction. The ship lay dead, powerless, unmanageable, quivering at every surge that thumped against her; while the dark green waves, curling over the weather bulwarks, rolled in cataracts down the decks, gurgling, hissing, roaring, and tossing their white crests fiercely on high. Though the lighter, and more easily handled sails of the schooner had been got in, the first shock of the squall had laid her, like us, so much on her beam ends, that her tall masts overhung our decks, and threatened, if we recovered first, to be interlocked with our own. It was a terrible moment. The roaring of the elements among our rigging was deafening, and the spray, flying across our decks in showers, shut out everything from our sight. Suddenly I saw the topmost of the schooner rising gracefully from above us—our own followed as if linked to them by invisible cords; we righted, rolled to windward, staggered an instant like a drunken man, and then gathering headway, swept off like a thunderbolt before the squall. The schooner darted wildly in our wake, but we passed from her like a whirlwind. The last sight that met my eyes, amid the misty shroud of spray, was the form of my superior still standing on the ratlin, and waving his arm, as if seconding by a gesture his commands. But amid the roar of the hurricane, the words he spoke might as well have been uttered to the dead.

We did not see the STORM again, after that fearful night until we reached port. Happily both vessels had survived the tempest!

ALICE LINLY.

BY CATHARINE RAYMOND.

CHAPTER I.

"AND so Alice is going to the city, Mrs. Linly," asked Susan Brown, the village seamstress, and a bit of a gossip too withal.

"For this winter," was the quiet reply of her lady-like employer.

"Well I never!" pursued Susan, letting her work drop on her lap, and lifting her hands; "I did hear you was a-going to send the girl away—but I just said to myself, I won't believe any such nonsense till I hear it from herself!"

"And why nonsense, Susan?"

"Why to think of letting such a young, pretty, hair-brained thing, go among all kinds of wickedness, away from her mother and her comfortable home, to learn new manners, and so catch a husband who will never let her come back to her simple home! Why you might just as well bid good-bye to her at once!"

"Not so, Susan. Alice is simply going to her aunt, to stay six months in closer retirement than she lives even *here*; and to pursue her studies under more competent instructors than Brookfield affords. I hope to see my darling Alice return, if changed at all, for the better," and a tear glistened in the mother's eye.

The Linly's were a small and happy family; Dr. Linly was a physician—the only one the village boasted. They lived unostentatiously and quietly; but the gentle tastes of the mother and Alice threw around and over the house the sunshine of simple refinement.

At the time our story commences, Alice Linly was seventeen, radiant with health, beauty and happiness; drinking joy from every source; gathering honey from every flower. Her character was an uncommon one—combining many fine characteristics with others which made her parents, especially her mother, watch over her with deep solicitude. Sensitive, tender and true; generous, elevated and courageous in her actions; enthusiastic, visionary and excitable to the last degree—Mrs. Linly saw how hard the pathway of life would be unless Alice attained that self-control in which she was wanting, and which it had been the mother's aim from her infancy to instil in her breast. And Alice strove hardly for it. Hitherto she had experienced

none but childish troubles, and over them she had sometimes failed. Time alone would prove whether in deeper joy or sorrow the precepts of her childhood would govern her life.

After Alice came a sister; then a brother. There was another brother, some years older than our heroine, but he was in the city, engaged in business in a merchantile house of celebrity. How the girl had wept, when two years ago, Jack had gone away; but now her eyes danced joyously in anticipation of a meeting and she flung her arms in a transport of joy around little Willie's neck.

"Why I *guess* you thought I was Jack!" exclaimed the boy, so soon as he could extricate himself from her embrace—peering roguishly up into her large, brown eyes—shaded by lashes tipped with gold!—*maybe from the sunlight ever streaming from the orbs beneath*, as Jack had once said half playfully, half earnestly.

CHAPTER II.

AND Alice went away from her childhood's home to the great, bustling city! Sad were the tears she shed as she nestled in her parent's arms, and sad for a time her meditations after the parting. But the girl was as Fanny Forester beautifully says, a *genuine honey gatherer*, and so the light stole again beneath the bright curtains of her eyes, and the color trembled again within her oval cheek.

The fair girl wrote often, and spoke gratefully and affectionately of her aunt, and rapturously of her brother, who, she affirmed, was "just the same dear, merry fellow," and his bright, black curls the same as ever! It seemed so natural to run her fingers through the shining masses. "And dear mother," she wrote, "I could not help thinking what a splendid soldier Jack would make! It is such a pity he is not one!"

Then the girl went on to speak of her studies in the same glad strain; but every few moments reverted again to "dear, handsome Jack!"

Alice had been nearly six months in the city, and was about returning home, when she went, one evening, to the elegant mansion of Mrs. Horton, an intimate friend of her fashionable aunt, who had seen

the secluded beauty, and felt a romantic disposition to "patronize" her.

The guests, with the exception of some half dozen, were complete strangers to our heroine. Her hostess introduced and introduced, and doubtless intended to make her acquainted with all; but probably became weary, or forgot some in the endless throng; and so it was that the noblest star athwart the giddy circle remained *unintroduced* and unaware of her presence. For Alice shrank from observation, and remained in one of the vast parlors; and the complete realization of her "ideal" scarce moved from the corner, in the other room, where were gathered round him an admiring crowd, listening to his strange eloquence.

"Jack do tell me who that gentleman by the piano is?"

"What the one with light hair?"

"Oh, no! The one with those splendid eyes! Can't you see how their light seems to fall on those around him? Now he is talking to Madame L——."

"I do not know him, sister mine, but as you seem 'clean daft' on the subject, I will make inquiries. Mrs. Horton," turning to that lady, and disregarding with a mischievous smile the effort Alice made to keep him back, "Mrs. Horton, Ally wants to know who that superb cavalier in black is? There, in the other room!"

"What! enchanted *ma beauté*?" playfully tapping her under the chin with her fan, "that is Mr. Conrad Etherington! Wait a moment! I will bring him and introduce him. It was a strange oversight in me not to make the 'lion' acquainted with the 'lioness!'" moving away as she spoke.

"Oh, pray don't!" cried the alarmed girl, springing after and detaining her.

"Why not! But I will!" laughing at the girl's consternation.

"Oh, do not, do not!" pleaded Alice. "You forget that I am but a simple child, unlearned in the ways of the city; indeed I would much rather not! The knowledge of its being a premeditated thing, would make me awkward and confused. Please do not; I am very happy as I am, and you would not destroy all my enjoyment," looking up with her coaxing eyes.

"You are a strange, silly girl; but if you would really not be introduced, I suppose I must indulge you, though it is such a sacrifice that I hardly know how to forgive you," looking admiringly down at the deep bloom on the agitated girl's face.

"Thank you, thank you!" exclaimed Alice, sinking back upon a couch with a look of relief.

Yet that evening, whenever Alice Linly was free for a moment from the admiring throng, did she follow with her *intense* and earnest gaze the noble form of Conrad Etherington, who with his quiet, *almost* holy brow, his deep, dark eyes, and firm, proud mouth, fixed himself, although unconscious, not the less securely, in the fond memory of the young and ardent girl. She saw him not again till the last evening of her stay. He was a superb musician, and seated at the piano when the girl entered the room. She had not expected to meet him, and silently retreating to a corner of the room, listened for a long time with clasped hands, and parted, breathless lips! and the

stream of melody which issued from the noble instrument bore away on its deep and troubles waves the heart of Alice Linly!

"Gone, gone!" murmured the girl to herself, as she paced her apartment that night, and pressed her cold bosom which gave no throb back from its marble depths with her small, slender fingers. "Gone from me, and in a few short hours I shall be far way! My heart! Oh! why did I leave my happy home?"

CHAPTER III.

"ALICE! Alice!" shouted Willie Linly, as a carriage stopped at the door! "Alice!" flinging wide open the hall door, and receiving the first caress of the impatient girl as she sprang heedlessly from the steps. And then *mother* came and folded her as of old in a close embrace; gazing the while with tears upon the glowing face of her darling. And soon Alice was seated as of old, the centre of an admiring home circle, describing with all the force of her warm and vivid imagination, the life of the last six months.

"Ally," said her father, as she wound her arms around his neck that night before retiring, "thank the good God that thou hast come back unchanged! and pray that long mayest thou continue to be our love, and hope, and comfort—as thou now art."

"Not changed did he say? And I must pray to continue so!" murmured the girl to herself when alone. "Oh, but I am not the same! I will pray Heaven that I may go back to where I stood in thought and feeling, but a few short weeks ago."

Alice Linly was changed! Not outwardly as yet, but within the deep, well springing waters of affection lay roused and troubled.

Mrs. Linly saw this quickly. Her temperament so resembled her daughter's that a breath could not ruffle the calm of her darling's life, and she not perceive it. If Alice was wakeful at night, though her apartment was far from her mother's, so surely would sleep fly the parent's eyes, and a few quick steps bring her to her daughter's pillow to calm her unquiet girl.

Alice Linly was young yet—but a child—scarce eighteen. We have said she was enthusiastic and visionary. She was so—and she deemed it in her ignorance a light thing to throw out the full tide of her affections on a romantic object. It accorded precisely with her unformed and unreal ideal. She knew not till the deed was done how hard it is to draw back the heart to a home it no longer values. Foolish girl! was it for an affection which received no nourishment she had cast away happiness? At first she vaguely dreamed her love might find return. What though Conrad knew her not! She *hoped* he might. In all her favorite romances "things had turned out right" at last, and Alice firmly believed they were pictures of real life, (she *would* not think otherwise) and that she saw at last should win her guerdon; still months rolled away, and she found health and strength, and spirits failing before her spirit's struggles. Then despair suddenly seized on her. She ceased to hope, and pined swiftly and surely! a few months longer and Alice Linly had been at rest had not a sad event occurred which roused and bore away the girl from

self: called up the self-control so long forgotten, and changed her whole character for life. That event was the sudden decease of Dr. Linly by an apoplectic seizure.

Susan Brown had her usual complement of gossip on the subject; but now no one heeded her, for the "doctor" was universally loved and respected. He was borne away to his last earthly abode before Mrs. Linly recovered from the despairing stupor into which she had fallen on his death.

When at last she comprehended that he whom she loved she should *here* see no more, her grief was heart-rending! For a while she shed no tear. "Oh, if she could only weep!" exclaimed one of the sympathizing women, who had taken upon themselves the charge of affairs. At that moment Alice appeared.

"Don't let Alice go near her," whispered Susan Brown, to a kind-hearted creature, who with tears in her eyes beckoned her approach, "it will only make her feel worse to see that ghost of a daughter who will go next."

The mother heard the cruel words; she glanced up at the pale face of her child.

"Alice, Alice! you *must* not die!" and she stretched out her yearning arms.

"I shall not, mother! weep here on this bosom."

And like a child the enfeebled woman poured out her griefs upon the light form of her darling. "It did her good!" Another day and though still sorrowing deeply, she was calm and composed, and able to attend to all necessary arrangements for their removal to the city, whither, by the advice of her son and best friends, it was thought best to go. There was but little left for the family. But Jack had obtained a small share in the business with which he was concerned; and Alice had expressed her intention of turning her education to account as day governess—a situation offering most opportunely in the city, which could be procured—and then Dora and Willie would have the benefit of good schooling, and so be enabled, in *their* turn, to cast in their mites.

When once a change was determined upon, Mrs. Linly was not long in carrying it into operation; and in a short time the family was quietly settled in the city. Then came a time of bitter trial for Alice! How she struggled for mastery over self! Grief for her father's loss had at once incited her to action for others, and paralyzed her feelings—while amid the bustle of the funeral and the removal, leisure had not been afforded her to indulge them; but now the usual routine had resumed its sway in their orderly household; rendered more serious than ever of course by their late affliction. The weight of years sat on the mother's brow; and hushed were the merry voices of the children—at least in the family circle. And Alice, as every morning rose, and she returned to her arduous duties among a set of riotous, thoughtless children, felt her very *soul* sink in prospect of the long, long day, few minutes of which were hers, either bodily or mentally.

When her pupils gathered round her, then she must cast thought behind her, and attend to their studies; and when school labors were over there were others

at home, numerous and varied, which fully occupied hand and head, if not *heart*.

To soothe the aching brow of the drooping widow was hers; to force the tongue to speak which would fain have been silent, and strive by gentle, cheerful conversation and reading, to draw her mother's mind away from her loss; to answer the thousand questions of Willie, whose active mind was ever on the go; to attend to the studies of her sister Dora; to strive to make home the pleasantest place for her merry brother Jack; and to forget the worm at the root of her own happiness, were duties neither few nor light for Alice, and *brave* was the spirit required to perform them. Where gained she the *spirit* and the strength? Morning and evening beheld the sweet face of her so lately a happy, thoughtless child, bowed in prayer before her Maker, her small fair hands clasped upon that "best of books," which was her daily study. She had learned that

"If ever life shall seem
To thee a toilsome way,
And gladness cease to beam
Upon its clouded day;
If, like the wearied dove,
O'er shoreless ocean driven,
Raise thou thine eye above—
There's rest for thee in Heaven!"

CHAPTER IV.

"WHAT do you think, Ally?" exclaimed Willie, bounding into the parlor one evening, "Jack has got me a place in a lawyer's office! I'm *going* to be a lawyer myself, one of these days, and a famous one I'll make too," frisking about before her, and disclosing as he spoke two rows of shining ivory.

"Indeed! but what are you going to do about school?"

"Oh, I'm going to study at night! Jack's going to teach me, and you, *maybe*," peering roguishly up into her face.

It was an old trick of his, and Alice stooped down and kissed his rosy mouth with a fond smile.

"You are the *very best* sister," exclaimed the boy, "and when I grow up you shall have nothing to do—but sit all day and *every* day—or walk, or ride, and go to as many concerts as you please! Don't tell—but I saw Jack buying tickets at Osborn's as I came along, for the concert to-night—I wonder who he's going to take. I thought *you*, of course, or I would have pulled his nose!"

"Hush, hush, wild Willie!" exclaimed Alice, unable to help smiling at the purposed mode of revenge for neglect of her.

"Oh, yes!" replied the boy, "you never think Jack does wrong! But you don't ask me to whose office I'm going!"

"Well then—whose?"

"Mr. Conrad Etherington's! Jack says you've seen him before; but how you stare; how wild you look!"

"Only see how I have pricked my finger," she replied, assigning that as the cause of her agitation.

"Well, I declare! I never saw you make such a fuss before for a trifle!" said the boy. "Here let me kiss the place to make it well! Isn't Mr. Etherington

handsome?" he continued, still bending over the taper finger.

"I don't know, I forget!"

"Don't know, forget! I guess you never saw him then. Jack says there's not such another man in Philadelphia. By George! but he's *superb*! as you ladies say."

"Why, Willie, how your tongue does run," interrupted his mother, who was slowly recovering health and spirits.

"Oh, no—mother darling," was the coaxing reply, as he bent fondly over her, and kissed either pale cheek.

Jack's step was heard in the entry, and away bounded the lively boy to meet him.

"Why how soon you come; going to a concert though, eh! That accounts for it," with a knowing look. Jack laughed merrily.

"Thou art entirely too precocious for a brother of mine. I shall have to ship you off, youngster."

"Not till you tell me who you're going to take," responded the boy.

"My little meek faced Alice for one," he replied, placing his hands caressingly around her snowy neck.

"Dear Jack! how kind," murmured the girl, with a glad tear in her eye.

"And for whom is the other?"

"Miss Dora, if you please," drawing her up to him, and chucking her under the chin.

"Thank you, dear brother! Oh, I'm so glad," and the girl caracoled after the fashion of a dancing master for pure joy. It was so seldom that she went out. She was formed for society—to adorn it—by her beauty, her wit, and her playfulness. She was very unlike Alice—unlike what Alice *had* been. A dainty spice of coquetry in her disposition; a thousand little ways and wiles to attract the admiration of which she was so fond.

"Must I get ready now, Jack?" she asked.

"Pretty soon, sis."

"What must I wear?"

"Oh, anything you please. I don't think you'll make your fortune to-night."

"You don't know that!" replied the girl, archly, bounding away to smooth the bright curls of golden hue, which lay carelessly upon her dimpled neck. An hour elapsed, and the two girls stood ready and waiting.

"To think of having to wait for a man!" chuckled Willie. "I have always heard that women made men wait."

"But now you find you are mistaken," laughed Dora, tying the strings of her hood.

"Will you be *very* lonely, mother?" whispered Alice, kneeling beside her parent. "If you think so I will stay."

"Oh, no, darling! bless you," tears starting to her eyes. "Go—maybe it will do you good. Willie is very pleasant company."

"Well then, sweet mother, good night; don't sit up for us if we are late," and she rose and passed her small hand through her brother's arm.

He smiled and said, "they say birds of a feather flock together; but I've got two of very different

species, I perceive. Dora, attired for conquest, and my little Ally, for what? I'm sure I cannot tell with that simple cottage bonnet. Why have you put back all these bright curls which used to gamble so decorously around your rosy face? Cheer up, Ally darling, and get fat again, or I won't own you. No one would have dreamed, two years ago, that that frolicsome countenance would become so meek, so Madonna-like in expression. But here am I standing when we should be travelling, and at a pretty rapid rate too, I perceive," looking at his watch.

"Alice dear," exclaimed Jack, during the recess, "there is Mr. Etherington! Willie's 'boss,' that is to be."

"Where?" her pale lips pronounced, as she turned her head in the direction indicated.

It was indeed he—her lofty idol; that idol she had so long struggled to uproot from her fond, dreaming heart. His brilliant eye rested for a moment on Jack, then passed to Alice, whom he attentively regarded. The heart of Alice Linly ceased for the moment its pulsations—she felt the color come and go in her face—the bench seemed sinking beneath her. She knew, though her eyes were downcast, that he was winning his way to them.

"Do you know who that gentleman is who is coming this way?" asked Dora Linly, in an excited tone.

"Yes," replied Jack—"it is Mr. Etherington. Good evening, sir," he continued, as the young lawyer paused beside them, and held out his hand in friendly greeting. Again Alice heard that low, rich voice she had never hoped to hear—and it was speaking to her. Poor girl! The wild revulsion of feeling was too much for her self-possession. She strove to answer, but her voice died in her throat. She struggled, stammered, and was silent. The deepest bloom which had ever tinged her face settled there. She closed the long silken lashes to force back the coming tears, and for a moment felt as though she must give way to the wild emotions which agitated her; but with a brave effort she restrained herself, and confined to her tortured bosom all her distress.

Compassionating what he thought extreme timidity and bashfulness, Etherington turned to her sister, and it seemed with better success, for when Alice recovered herself sufficiently to meet the reproachful eye of her brother, she saw her idol completely engrossed by Dora, who with the most bewitching and native coquetry, retained him by her side through the remainder of the evening.

CHAPTER V.

"I am going to bring Etherington here to-night," observed Jack to Dora, the next day after dinner.

"Are you?" exclaimed the girl, the warm blood mantling on her cheek. "How do you know—did he ask?"

"What?" replied her brother, laughing. "You must learn to put plain questions, child. Mr. Etherington did ask to come—and I am going to *indulge* him."

"You must set your cap for him, Dora," said Willie. "You can't guess what a grand house he lives in. I went there this morning; and such a

help of fine furniture, and books, and pictures, and statuary; and such a lot of servants. But all these are not half so fine as the man himself; and he said *something* about—about—no I won't tell you. So you need not look so eager," taking up his cap, and bounding from the room.

Dora followed him into the entry.

"Come—what did he say, Willie? That's a good boy."

"Oh, yes! *very* good now," laughing archly. "He said—he said—good bye," he shouted, as he escaped with a mischievous flourish from the house, leaving Dora crimson to the temple with resentment and vexation.

She was roused by the appearance of her sister, who was about returning to her duties. How sadly that pale, quiet face contrasted with the blooming, Hebe one beside it.

"Good afternoon, Dora; be sure and look your loveliest," and with a light, bitter laugh she passed out, but not with the buoyant heart of her April brother.

"Poor Ally! how glad I am that I don't look like she does," was the thought of the girl, as she wended her way up the narrow staircase with the full intention of following the advice, which she perceived not, was given in bitterness of spirit; for Alice was but mortal, and the "unruly member" *would sometimes* rebel.

And Conrad came—and was introduced to Mrs. Linly, who smiled pleasantly; and again to Alice. She answered his low, earnest salutation with tolerable composure, for she had prepared herself for it; and then seated herself in a quiet corner, and bent low over the garment she was making.

"Why, Dora, how long it takes you to settle yourself," exclaimed Willie, rather peevishly, as though not pleased with the arrangements which placed his favorite sister so much in the shade, opening his book as he spoke, and nestling beside her.

The girl addressed slung back her golden curls with a careless, saucy laugh, and, seating herself, claimed and obtained from her visitor undivided attention, and tasked his wits with her lively sallies and eager inquiries.

"Well! I never thought you were so forward before," exclaimed Willie, after Etherington's departure: "why nobody had a chance to say a word."

"For shame! Willie," said Alice, in a low voice. "That is unlike you."

"Oh, well, I did not mean harm; but it is so strange——"

"What strange, Willie?"

"Oh, nothing!" answered the boy, picking up the book which he had thrown down on her pettish out-break.

Time passed on, and Etherington became a regular, almost a constant visitor. On two or three occasions he had attempted to pursue his acquaintance with Alice; but her wild and frightened manner, when he spoke to her, and the embarrassment which overwhelmed her, deterred him from further advances.

"I cannot conceive why you lose all self-possession when Etherington addresses you," Jack had once

remarked. "The man must have bewitched you. I remember you showed the same strange fear at Mrs. Horton's, a long time ago, and begged her not to introduce you."

"No one can conceive what I *suffer*," murmured Alice to herself that night, as she knelt in the accustomed place, and strove to calm her troubled heart with searching and self-communion. "To see him thus day by day, and hear that low voice so earnest—so calm—so deep. I wonder if he loves Dora? It must be so, for he comes so often; and she—oh, she cannot help loving *him*! no one to whom his heart was given *could*!"

CHAPTER VI.

"I AM going to the 'Philharmonic' to-night, sis," exclaimed Dora Linly, springing toward the door as Alice entered one cold, clear evening.

"Are you? Oh, that will be delightful; who is going to *take* you?"

"Mr. Etherington!" replied Dora, with a triumphant smile.

Alice sighed, laid by her bonnet and cloak, and seated herself in the dim twilight by her mother's knee.

"Will you plait my hair, Ally dear?" whispered her sister, caressingly—winding her arm round her waist.

"Plait your hair," exclaimed Alice—"what! all those pretty curls?"

"Yes, *all*! Mr. Etherington said last night that he should like to see the effect, and begged me to *do* it. I asked him how—and he said he was not particular, that *your's* might serve as a model."

How Alice's heart throbbed, and she murmured chidingly to herself, "how foolish, how silly."

"He has sent me some of the most beautiful crimson flowers you ever saw," continued Dora.

"They will look very well in your fair hair," replied Alice.

"So I think; and now will you come up stairs, sis, for it grows late?"

They went up together, and the small fingers of Alice parted the wilful curls, and wove the massive plait which was to adorn the head of her sister. And then she wound it round the little silver comb, and twined the dark crimson bell-like flowers therein; and lastly, imprinted a tender kiss upon the pure, unstained brow beneath.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed Etherington, as Alice led Dora into the room, blushing and smiling like a June morning.

"So beautiful!" whispered Alice, with heartfelt joy and pride in the loneliness of her sister; speaking for the first time unspoken to.

His earnest eye fell suddenly upon her upraised face with thrilling expression. Alice started—crimsoned—and with a whirling heart and brain turned away. There was that in his glance which haunted her; it might mean nothing—and she sighed heavily as she took up her work, and seated herself by her mother.

Willie crept close to her, and slipped his hand in

hers, and looked up in her pale face. She whispered quietly—

"What now, darling?"

"Why I am angry!" exclaimed the boy, petulently. "I wish I was a man, I would take you to *every* concert. I do not like Mr. Etherington any more to think he should prefer Dora to you! Such a *great, wise* man should get a more sensible girl for a wife."

"Hush, hush, Willie," but the boy would speak. "I am mad at Dora, too!—I don't believe she cares a straw for Mr. Etherington!—only she is getting so vain."

"Willie," again said Alice; and this time with a graver face.

"Ally, let me say what I've got to say, and then I'll be good," pleaded the boy, "and not say anything more for an age. You are a great deal prettier than Dora, and I do wonder why you don't have any beaux. Such a lot of men as have got to coming here after *her*! If I was a man I'd never have any thing to do with girls who courted *me*, but seek out some quiet darling, sister Alice!"

"There—that will do, Willie," said his mother, smiling. "You'll have Ally as vain as a peacock presently."

"No fear of that," exclaimed the boy, confidently. While speaking he had gradually worked the sleeve of his sister's dress above the elbow, and now drew her arm forward in the light.

"What are you after *now*, Willie?"

The boy laughed.

"I wish Mr. Etherington was here now," he said, "to see how much prettier Ally's arm is than Dora's. But Ally you used to have a host of dimples *here*," pointing to her elbow.

"They are all *gone* now, Willie," smiling faintly.

"Too bad," replied her brother, "you must get fat again. I really think you are paler than ever."

"Very likely," thought the girl, but she said it not, but looked up with a *cheery* smile, for her mother was by—that mother whom she so fondly loved, and who so idolized her "summer child."

"Do you know," said Willie, later in the evening, as he sat alone with his sister, his thoughts reverting to the old subject—"do you know that I don't think Mr. Etherington cares a farthing for Dora?"

"Why, Willie, what are you dreaming about tonight? Why don't you think so?"

"Because I often notice that all the time he is listening and talking to Dora, he keeps looking at you; and when you speak so sweetly to mother and bathe her head—and when you keep telling me about my lessons—his great, big eyes follow you, and he looks so pleased and admiring. *I see!*" said the boy, with a knowing shake of the head.

"Why, Willie!" and Alice dropped her work, and fairly burst into tears.

"Oh, Ally! I did not mean to hurt you—forgive me—please do—I *could* not mean to offend you! Will you forgive me?"

"Yes, yes, darling! only leave me."

A few moments and the penitent boy had kissed her and gone away; and Alice wiped her streaming eyes: but the glad showers still fell, and again did

she exclaim, "how silly! how foolish!" but not this time with such hearty emphasis. The "fairy alchemist" was creeping into her true heart once more.

The next evening brought a lady visitor with Mr. Etherington, whom he introduced as his sister, Mrs. St. Clair—a fine, fashionable looking woman of about thirty-five.

"You must excuse this intrusion," she said, speaking to Mrs. Linly, "but Conrad has given such glowing descriptions of your family circle, that I could not resist the pleasure of making your acquaintance," and the world wearied lady laid aside her shawl and bonnet, and spent, perhaps, the first calm, happy, rational evening in years in the humble family circle of the Linly's.

She was evidently a votary of society; and accustomed to command admiration and homage; but her mind had been well cultivated, and she charmed alternately by her fascination of face and manner, and the soft accents which fell from her lips. Dora especially listened with delight to the glowing pictures her fancy created; but the lady, it seemed, took an especial interest in the quiet Alice, whose large eyes were never raised save when addressed. How could she talk, for Conrad was by her side, and though he nothing spoke, her heart was singing for joy—and the long, golden-tipped lashes pressed the grave cheek lovingly, less some glad beams should escape and betray her secret.

"Oh, what a sigh, sis!" exclaimed Willie to Dora, as the door closed over their visitors. "Who is it for?"

"Dora sighs that the bright star has faded, and she cannot follow," said Jack, mischievously—and the tender mother sighed to see how the world, all deceitful as it is, was charming the girl, and arousing vain desire in her young breast.

A few more days passed, and then came cards for a party at Mrs. St. Clair's, followed in the course of the evening by a visit from that lady and her brother; "to obtain in person their answer," she said, "and overrule all objections."

Mrs. Linly said "nay" at first—"such gay society was not for them, whose every moment should be occupied in earning their bread."

"But this once!" asked the lady, who showed a warm disposition to *patronize*.

"One indulgence would but arouse wishes for more," was the reply.

But the lady pleaded so winningly, and smiled so sweetly on the mother's "summer child," and Dora's glad eyes sparkled so at the thought; and even Jack spoke a word in favor of it that her resolution gave way at last.

"Your mother's consent gained, of course you will come dears," said Mrs. St. Clair.

"Oh, yes!" said Dora; but Alice was silent.

"My dear Miss Linly, you will come?"

"I think not," she murmured, with hesitation.

"Oh, yes—you *must*! the brightest ornament of my rooms to disappoint me; that must not be."

Still the girl was silent. She stood rather apart, and Conrad came, and stooping over her, whispered in his thrilling tones—

"Will you not come?"

She raised her eyes a moment to those bent so earnestly upon her, but the veined lids drooped instantly, and the warm color stole up to her temples. It was his first request, and *could* she refuse it?

CHAPTER VII.

"Look at these beautiful flowers, girls," cried Willie Linly, bursting into their room as they sat there on the afternoon preceding the party, busy at their simple preparations.

"For me I know," exclaimed Dora, bounding from before the glass, and attempting to seize them.

"No you don't *this* time; just be quiet, Miss Dora; you'll have to *share* Mr. Etherington's favors to-night. 'Compliments to Misses Linly,'" he continued, snapping his fingers mischievously. "Here, Ally, you're the elder, take your choice. Jasmine or white rose-buds?"

The girl was so "full" that she could hardly speak, but she murmured—

"No—let Dora take *her* choice—it makes no difference to me."

"I don't believe that!" said Willie, stoutly. "Who used to think so much of her tea-roses at Brookfield? Choose—choose!"

"Well then, Dora, I believe I will take the buds; you are fond of the jasmine, I know."

"Yes—quite as much as of the others," replied the girl, rather sobered by her late mistake, "only you'll put them in for me, won't you?"

"Let me separate them," said Willie, searching for a pair of scissors.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Alice, springing forward, "let me," and she took the flowers from her brother's hands with trembling, *almost* with reverence.

How her taper fingers thrilled as they came in contact with the white blossoms. She would have given worlds to have kissed them, and laid them, if but for a moment, in her bosom, but Willie's sharp, all-seeing eyes were there, and she dared not.

When she stood before the glass that evening, she loosened the long bands of silken hair which she had worn quite plain since her father's death; and once more turned their glossy abundance over her slender fingers. How *natural* the action seemed; it brought back thoughts of other days, when she was gay and happy. How wretched she had been since—till now—and a happy tear gemmed her soft eye, and nestled in the petals of the pure bud in her hand. She shook the flower, but it still lingered; and she placed it among the mazy curls with a half sad, half saucy smile, which called up the long forgotten dimples from their hiding places. And then she donned the white muslin dress, which disclosed the soft, snowy neck and rounded arms, and stood before her brother to hear his "critique."

"My sweet sister!" and he drew her to him, and pressed his lips to hers with the lingering pressure a lover might use. "The 'light of other days' is *brightening* again," he whispered, playfully.

At the door of Mrs. St. Clair's drawing-room they encountered Etherington.

"May I not relieve you of a fair charge, Mr. Linly?" and he offered his arm to the happy Alice. She laid her small fingers lightly within it, but he drew them with a gentle pressure closer to him, and led her to his sister.

"Charmant! charmant!" exclaimed Mrs. St. Clair, with unbounded admiration; and Alice blushed more deeply than ever as she turned away, and heard on every side the same exclamations.

"You do not like this—you would prefer the library or conservatory," said the low voice of Etherington; and Alice forgot—*heard* not the noise around. The place seemed suddenly so quiet—only his words were audible.

"Shall we go?"

"Yes," she replied, in a tone the echo of his own. At the door of the conservatory they met Mrs. Horton.

"Do you know my aunt?" exclaimed Conrad, in some surprise; observing their mutual and friendly recognition.

"Your aunt?"

"Yes," replied that lady, taking upon herself to answer, "we became acquainted an age ago—when Miss Linly was here on a visit, and just before her departure. I gave you a party, I think, did I not? Oh, yes! I did—I recollect now, for I was going to introduce you to Conrad, and you would not let me."

He glanced at her inquisitively, and the girl's eyes fell beneath his gaze, but Mrs. Horton rattled on.

"So now you are in the city again. To live—Mrs. St. Clair tells me—the first word I heard of your *being* was to-night. Too bad! that you should have been here so long, and I not know it; how you must have missed your good aunt's society; it was rather unfortunate that just as you removed to the city she should go away."

Here the lady broke off abruptly, and turned to her nephew.

"Isn't she perfectly exquisite, Conrad?—be sure you fall in love with her."

"The deed is done," he whispered, bending his proud head so that none could hear save the one to whom he was speaking; and as Mrs. Horton passed on, he drew Alice within a recessed window in the conservatory, and questioned her as to the reason why she declined his acquaintance. The girl murmured a few words inaudibly, and became silent.

"Why, Alice?" he asked again.

"I—I cannot tell—do not ask," she replied.

"And why not, dearest?"

"I could not answer my own heart," she faltered, "for it asked the question long ago."

"Well then, sweet Alice, I *will* not, if," and his low voice thrilled with deeper meaning, "if you will answer another," and he bent down and whispered something in accents so low that the ear of the listener must have been attuned to *love* to hear them. Alice spoke not—she *could* not; but the "light of love" trembled in her eyes, and he drew her to his close embrace with deep and passionate fervor. He stooped over the face which rested on his bosom, and imprinted a holy kiss upon the dreaming mouth.

"Alice, look up, love!"

"I thought that Dora was your choice," murmured Alice.

"I have *never* loved Dora, not from the first moment; and she has never loved me. She has not as yet found out that she possesses a heart. *It* has not found its echo; but I have found *mine*—and in you! Alice my star, my dream, *love* me; be mine—my life."

And Alice, calmed by his words, elevated by his almost holy gaze, his earnest truth, murmured—

"I am yours!"

CHAPTER VIII.

"WELL, Ally, my bird, you have fine feathers now, if you never have them again," said Jack Linly, as he lounged away an idle hour in the boudoir of Mrs. Conrad Etherington. The girl was busy at an old employment—running her slender fingers through her brother's wavy curls—and she merely laughed; a sweet, happy laugh, which minded one of *old times* and her girlhood, and said with an arch glance—

"Just so, brother Jack."

"And a happy bird she is," chimed in Willie, appearing at the door, "are you not, Ally?"

"So happy!" murmured the girl, the bright tears gathering wilfully spite of her efforts.

"Who sent for you, youngster?" questioned Jack of the boy, "interrupting our tete-a-tete."

"Stand back," answered Willie, drawing up with an air of offended dignity, "you forget who I am! I count myself *somebody* since my relation to Mrs. Etherington."

"Madam," advancing and falling on one knee with a ludicrous assumption of respect, "I was commis-

sioned to deliver this parcel to you by your husband."

"What is it?" said the girl, reaching out her little hand eagerly for it.

"Doubtless some 'trifle rich and rare,'" interposed Jack. "I am astonished at your curiosity, Mrs. Etherington; such childishness ill befits your state and dignity; pray how often do you receive these nonsensical contraptions?"

"I'm *sure* I cannot tell," laughed the young wife, placing in her bosom the little note accompanying the gift.

"I dare say not; but it won't last long; wait till the honeymoon is over."

"Why how long a limit do you allow that happy period, Jack, since I have passed three months of wedded life already?"

"Ah! I grant *you* a longer time than common, *ma belle*, on account of your having so perfect a husband; to say nothing of your own self, sweet sister," his tone changing to one of deep feeling as he pronounced the last words and kissed her pure cheek, where the wild-rose bloom was deepening day by day with the intensity of her happiness.

"It shall be life-long, dear Jack, as *he* said not very long ago. Please Heaven," she added, reverently.

"Shall it not, dearest?" she asked an hour later, when she lay folded in her husband's arms, and he bent over her with deep devotion.

Of course, he said; "yes," no other answer could be made to those trusting eyes.

Sweet Alice! we cannot do better than leave her now—while the sun still streamed *brightly* on her path—while friends near and dear are around her, and she rejoices in the fulness of *changeless love*.

THE FIVE DOLLAR BILL.

NO. II.—THE SUSPECTED SERVANT.

BY HARRY SUNDERLAND.

I HAD expected, as I have said, to have remained a long while in the pocket of the hard landlord; but I was mistaken in this opinion; for an hour had scarcely passed after he received me, when his wife entered the room. She was equipped for a shopping excursion, and wanted money.

"How much?" he asked, in reluctant tones.

"Give me fifty dollars."

"Fifty dollars!" replied the husband. "What do you want with so much?"

"I've got a great many things to get."

"I can't spare fifty dollars."

"Nor fifty cents neither, I suppose. But, I can't help that. You must give me what I want."

"Won't twenty-five do?"

"No. I must have have at least fifty."

The man really groaned in spirit.

"I think you are extravagant, my dear," he said.

"And I think you are miserly, my dear," she replied, half laughing, half serious. "But come, let me have the money; time is passing, and I have a good many places to go."

"I can spare you thirty-five," said the husband.

"But I want fifty. No, let me see——"

"Won't forty do?"

"No; I forgot a shawl that I must get for Aggy. Make it seventy."

"Seventy! No—no. It's no use to talk. I can't let you have that much to-day."

The pocket-book now saw the light, and, with nine others of a like denomination, were removed therefrom and handed to the lady, who took us, and said nothing of the extra twenty. That was only a *ruse* to enable her to get what she wanted.

In half an hour from this time, I was in the money drawer of a certain dry good's dealer in Chestnut street, and half an hour after that, in the purse of a lady to whom I was given in change. She left me at a confectioner's, and the confectioner paid me, that night, to one of his workman, who handed me over to his wife. On the next morning I was taken to market and paid to a butcher. But he didn't keep me long, for laying me carelessly in his pocket-book, with one of my edges sticking out, and thrusting his book into his pocket, with an end exposed, I presented too good an opportunity for a trial of skill by one of the light-fingered gentry, and left his possession without, I presume, his being the wiser of the transaction.

The person who thus, unlawfully, became my owner, was a gentleman so far as dress and appearance were concerned. He left the market-house without waiting to see if I would be missed, and took

his way toward Third street, where he exchanged me with a broker for a five dollar gold piece. The next man at the broker's counter was a poor fellow who had received his week's wages in uncurrent small bills, upon which he was obliged to lose three per cent discount. The last comer into the broker's drawer, I was the first on top, and being handy was paid out to the journeyman mechanic, who took me home and gave me to his wife. She being in a worry about something at the moment, tucked me into her bosom, without thinking what she did.

This was on Saturday. After supper that night, the man who had received me from the broker, said to his wife.

"I think we'd better pay something on our bill at the store. Its been getting heavier and heavier every week instead of lighter. I suppose we might spare three dollars, and lessen it that much every week until it is paid. I'm really out of all heart with these bills running up. We must try and pay for every thing we get, and if we haven't the money for what we happen to want, try to do without it until we have. This being forever in debt, disheartens me."

"I'm sure," said the wife, "it troubles me as much as it does you. Yes; pay three dollars by all means; and I'll try and make what's left do us until Saturday."

"Give me the bill then, and I'll go and pay three dollars out of that. We'll want the other change to use."

"The bill! what bill?" asked the wife in surprise, and with a look of bewilderment.

"The five dollar bill I gave you when I came home at dinner time. What did you do with it?"

"Yes; now I remember that you did give me a bill," said the wife, thoughtfully. "I must have put it in my little box in the bureau drawer, where I keep my change."

And she went to her little box, her bosom panting with alarm. But she did not find me there.

"I'm sure I put it here," she said. "I think I remember it distinctly. Oh, I must have put it here. I always put my money in this box."

"But where is it?" asked the husband.

"Sure enough! Where is it? I put it here; and it couldn't have gone away without hands."

"Of course not."

Meantime, the wife, who could not have been very sure about the disposition she had made of me, was rummaging in her bosom, her fingers almost touching me time after time, yet not coming into apprehensible contact.

"Maybe you put it somewhere else?" suggested the husband. "Look in the drawer."

"No! I'm sure I put it in the box." Yet, while she said this, the wife turned the drawer, in which she kept her box, all topsy turvy. She did not find the object of her anxious search.

"Look in your pocket," said the husband, upon whose forehead the drops of sweat began to stand. He had worked hard for his wages, and to lose so large a sum as I represented was no light matter for him.

"I know it isn't there. I put it in the box," replied the wife, as she turned her pockets inside out. And in a moment asked the question—

"Are you sure you gave me the money?"

"You are sure you put it in the box. If I had not given it to you, how could you have made that disposition of it? Certainly I gave it to you. I remember it as well as if it had been done but a minute ago."

"Then somebody's got it," said the wife, in a low tone, half looking over her shoulder. "Of course, if you gave it to me, I put it in the box where I always keep my money."

"It's a serious matter to accuse any one of stealing," suggested the husband.

"I know it is; but the money couldn't have gone without hands." And again she looked over her shoulder, in the direction of a young girl who was at work in the kitchen.

The husband looked worried and perplexed.

"Suppose you ask Jane if she knows anything about it," he said.

The woman, acting upon this hint, called the girl. "Jane," she said, looking accusation at the child, "I've lost a five dollar bill. Have you seen it?"

"No, ma'am," replied the child, thus suddenly addressed, who felt that suspicion was attached to her, and could not help coloring and looking frightened and confused.

"I put it in this box," said the woman, sternly, contracting her brow, and fixing her eyes upon the girl, "and now it's gone. It couldn't have walked away."

"Indeed, ma'am I haven't got it," protested Jane.

"Who said you had? You are very quick with your denial," retorted the woman. "I shall begin to think you have taken it."

"Oh, no, indeed, indeed, ma'am! I've not been near your drawer," said the girl, bursting into tears; another evidence in the eyes of her accuser that she had stolen the money.

"But didn't you find the bill on the floor?" was asked.

"Oh, no ma'am. I haven't got the bill. Indeed I haven't."

"Where is it then?"

"Indeed, ma'am, I don't know," replied the girl, weeping and wringing her hands.

"Well, I don't believe you!" retorted the woman, passionately. "Your very face and manner betray you. I think we had better search her trunk," she added, turning to her husband.

"Do, do!" said the child. "It isn't there. You won't find it there?"

"Then where is it? you little thieving huzzy!" exclaimed the woman, losing all command of herself.

"If you don't tell me this instant, I'll send for a police officer and have you taken before an alderman!"

The poor child fell upon her knees, and in an agony of tears vowed, before Heaven, that she was innocent, and implored her accuser to spare her. The man now interposed, and told the girl that he would be very sorry to think she was guilty of such a dreadful crime, and sincerely hoped that she was innocent. But that as a five dollar bill had been taken from his wife's drawer, and she was the only person in the house besides themselves, suspicion very naturally fell upon her.

"But she might have dropped it," said the girl, gaining some control over herself; "or put it in her bosom in a hurry. I remember, she thought she lost money once before, and——"

"Silence! this instant!" exclaimed the woman. "No! I put it in the box in my drawer, and somebody's taken it out. And you know who's got it too, well enough!"

It was all in vain that the poor child protested that she was innocent. Her trunk, her room, and her person were searched, and she made to hear from the excited woman all kinds of words of abuse. Of course the search was useless, for I still lay against the passion-heaving bosom of the wife. At last the husband interposed, and sent the girl to the kitchen. He was, by this time, pretty well satisfied that she hadn't the missing bill. And now commenced a search in every nook and corner of the rooms, drawers and closets up stairs and down, which was continued until bed-time, without avail. At a late hour they prepared to retire for the night.

"What's that?" said the husband, as I fell to the floor, on the woman's removing her dress, stooping and picking me up as he spoke. "The bill, as I live!"

The wife stood in utter amazement.

"And so it was in your bosom all the time!"

"Well, I declare! Now I recollect that when you gave it to me, I tucked it in my bosom. I was too busy at the time to put it away."

"I'm very sorry that you accused poor Jane," said the husband.

"So am I. But it can't be helped now."

"I really feel bad about it. Poor child! You ought to be more careful."

"I know I ought. But it's too late to mend it now. It'll be a lesson to me to take better care of money another time."

"I hope it will. Has Jane gone to bed?"

"Yes. Why?"

"If she's up, you ought to let her know at once that the money's found. It will relieve her mind."

"I don't know that anything need be said about it. She's conscious of innocence, and that's enough."

"I think you ought to tell her."

"It'll be time enough to-morrow," replied the wife.

To-morrow came, and the sad looking girl prepared the breakfast. But not a word was said to her about my having been found. The fact was, the woman who had accused her was ashamed to let the girl know the truth. After breakfast Jane put on her things and went out. She did not return that night,

nor was she back on the Monday morning when I was taken away and changed at the grocer's. What further passed on the subject, of course I know not. I was but little surprised at the occurrences of Saturday night, for I had seen such things before. I have been lost pretty much in the same way more than a dozen times in my life. Once, in this city, a poor colored girl was tortured most cruelly in order to

make her confess having stolen me, when I had been hurriedly laid in between two leaves of a large family Bible and forgotten. I believe I reposed there for three months before I was discovered by a young lady who was trying her lover with the Bible and a key. The person who placed me there, then recollected all about it.

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IDA NORTON.

BY MISS LOUISE OLIVIA HUNTER.

"Be it as you wish, Ida."

The words were uttered in a cold, calm tone, and the speaker, Arthur Norton, turned hastily away to conceal the emotion that rested upon his countenance.

His young and beautiful wife was seated upon a sofa at a short distance from him. Her cheek was very pale, while her dark eyes flashed angrily upon her companion, and their expression betrayed that all the warmth of her nature had been called forth by the conversation which had just passed between them. In the height of her anger she had demanded a separation, and he—had assented to it! And the causes were these.

The preceding night, Norton had accompanied his wife to a party given by a lady in the neighborhood. The rooms were both crowded and heated, and feeling oppressed with the warmth, he had left Ida talking to a lady friend, and retired for a few moments to an open window. While seated here, concealed from view by the folds of the curtain, a party of gentlemen stationed themselves near and began to converse. The subject of their remarks was a young married lady, who was present that evening, but whom they did not name. They spoke of her extreme beauty, her wealth, and her accomplishments, and then followed certain observations concerning her husband's blindness to her intimacy with a man of known profligacy of character. And while they conversed, one of the party pointed out the lady to a companion, and described the precise place where she sat. Not caring to become a listener any longer, Norton was about to move away when the names of the persons referred to met his ear. They were Mrs. Norton—even his own wife and Charles Clifford.

A sickening sensation stole over Arthur Norton's heart as this fearful discovery came upon him—for he felt that though Ida was not guilty, she was thoughtlessly exposing herself to the sneers and insults of the world. Very often had he warned her against being upon intimate terms with Charles Clifford—but Ida had known Clifford from her childhood, and regarded him with a sister's partiality, while she despised the world's opinion too heartily, for its sake to treat with coldness one whom she had always looked upon as a brother.

Ida had thought her husband much changed of late. Though they had been wedded scarcely a year, he no longer greeted her with that impassioned ardor which he had manifested during the days of courtship. She was the only child of a parent who idolized her, and whose fond affection for her showed itself in an almost lover-like devotion to her every wish—and being thus accustomed in her own home to hearing continually

the language of adulation, her heart continually craved the same from him to whom she was united. And when by degrees it became less frequently accorded her, forgetting that Norton was no longer the lover but the husband, she began to imagine that he did not love her with that warmth for which she pined. Too proud to tell him her thoughts, she became cold and reserved toward him, and thus Norton was led to think from her chilling demeanor, that she had never truly cared for him, and now regretted her error in choosing the first one on whom her youthful fancy had alighted. Arthur Norton was passionately attached to his wife—but his feelings toward her did not often betray themselves in words—and it was these that Ida missed.

Charles Clifford, who has previously been alluded to, was the ward of Ida Norton's father. He had been associated with her constantly from childhood, and had regarded her with a deeper feeling than she was at all aware of. When Ida was in her sixteenth year, Clifford had just attained his majority, and then following the counsels of his guardian, he left his native land for a tour through Europe. The image of the lovely Ida was constantly in his thoughts during his sojourn abroad—and it became the hope of his heart that on his return she would become his wife. After a protracted absence of four years, Clifford once more found himself in the city of his birth—but alas! Ida was now the betrothed of another, and he arrived but in time to witness the celebration of the marriage ceremony. Concealing the disappointment that rankled in his bosom, Clifford mingled gaily among the guests, and received with a smiling lip the frank and affectionate welcome of the bride—but his heart throbbed with a thousand bitter emotions as he gazed upon the happy countenance of Arthur Norton, and a wild wish took possession of his soul for power to rob the bridegroom of the treasure that had just been committed to his keeping.

Regarding Clifford in the light she did, without thought of wrong Ida had often complained to him of her husband's change of manner, and with the eagerness of a selfish and revengeful nature, he gladly availed himself of this opportunity for sowing the seeds of discord between Norton and his wife, and while he artfully sympathized with her, managed to interweave insinuations concerning Arthur, in such a manner that the young and inexperienced Ida felt the sting, yet laid no blame on him who gave it. Charles Clifford was indeed a profligate. While he mixed with the society of Europe, he had beheld much to weaken his trust in woman—and when he daily listened to the repinings of Ida Norton he began

to imagine that she in reality loved him, and was but waiting for him to make advances that would induce her to leave her husband's roof forever.

There was also another cause that since her marriage had rendered Ida Norton's home uncomfortable. Her husband's mother had always been particularly averse to her daughter-in-law. The elder Mrs. Norton possessed a stern, haughty, exacting spirit. She was from the first prejudiced against Ida—for it was not her wish that Arthur should marry. She was devotedly attached to her son, and feared that when he brought his new idol to his home he would learn to look upon his parent with less love than formerly. And when the marriage took place, and her son's wife was constantly near her, the faults of that somewhat spoiled, but warm-hearted being, were continually frowned upon by the mother. To a gentle expostulation Ida would willingly have lent her attention and profited—but her proud spirit refused to bend where it met with nothing but cold looks and harsher manners. And so between the two there was ever a reserve, and though Ida would not acknowledge it even to herself, the dignified mien of her husband's mother not unfrequently sent a chill to her heart.

Let us return now to the spot where we left Norton. For a long time he remained in his hiding-place, not daring to stir lest he should be discovered—but at length the party moved away, and then very cautiously he came forward, and glanced in the direction where his wife had been described as sitting. She was still there, and Clifford too was beside her. He was conversing to her in a low tone—her delicate hand rested confidingly in his, and those speaking eyes gazed earnestly into his face.

Norton was too noble to wrong his wife by a thought of jealousy—he knew that she merely felt a sister's affection for Clifford—yet he could not help confessing to himself that her situation was such as to attract the suspicions of those who knew not as he did, the purity of her soul. The thought that one so dear to him was even now the object of censure, stung his sensitive heart deeply. His resolve was immediately taken. He would bear her away that very instant—she should remain there no longer to be exposed to the ill-natured remarks of the world. With a pale cheek he now approached to her side, and whispered a request that she should accompany him home. Ida raised her eyes wonderingly to his face for a moment—then hastily rising she bade Clifford good evening, and taking her husband's arm, they left the crowded assembly. During the ride homeward both were silent. Ida, with her usual pride, disdained asking the reason for their abrupt departure, though she was waiting with impatience for her husband to explain it—while Norton did not do so because he wished to delay an explanation till the morrow, for he feared that if he told Ida all then, her impulsive nature would lead her to wrong conclusions, and perhaps cause her to say that which could never be forgotten. Once or twice before the carriage stopped at their residence, Norton hazarded a remark upon other topics, but Ida deeming that he had acted strangely and capriciously, persisted in maintaining a sullen silence.

That night neither closed their eyes in slumber.

Ida spent the hours in tears—Norton in meditation, and he determined that the next morning his wife should know the reason for his conduct the preceding night, and that he would then learn, if possible, the cause of her late coldness toward himself. Accordingly the next day, when the evening meal was over, and he found himself alone with Ida, he unfolded what had till then seemed so inexplicable to her. She heard him in silence, and when he had finished and once more besought her to avoid Charles Clifford for the future, a sudden suspicion flashed across her mind that Norton while giving her the world's opinion, was also shadowing forth his own. The very thought that her husband did not trust in her, was maddening to a spirit like Ida Norton's—and as Arthur ceased speaking, and looked eagerly into the face of his wife as if awaiting a reply, the blood came rushing in a crimson torrent to her brow, and in an excited tone she exclaimed, "I cannot, and will not endure this longer! I must leave this house—I will go again to my father's—to my own dear home where I was so happy till you, Arthur Norton, came there to destroy my peace forever. If you desire it I will never again countenance the one whom you have so basely calumniated—but I ask in return that you will consent to a separation between us."

Surprised, stunned and grief-struck, Norton had not at first power to answer her. But quickly recovering, and deeming her request merely a pretext to rid herself of the presence of a husband whom she did not love, he resolved to hide his emotion, and calmly and coldly his sanction was given to the arrangement, though all the while his heart was breaking.

That evening as Charles Clifford was preparing for a party, a note was handed him, which, on opening, he found to be from Ida Norton. Every circumstance of the affair above recorded, she now placed before him with her customary frankness, concluding by begging him in accordance with the promise given to her husband, never to come near her if he valued her future happiness. A triumphant smile appeared upon Clifford's countenance as he read—for he imagined that for him she had left Arthur Norton, and that the misunderstanding between the two was an artful invention on the part of Ida. So he very resolutely determined to abstain from visiting her for a short period, hoping that during his absence she would learn his value, and welcome him warmly, when, after a sufficient time had elapsed, they should again meet.

Just six weeks after the events last recorded, Ida Norton was seated in one of the apartments of her father's stately mansion, absorbed in a deep reverie. Her face wore an expression of settled melancholy—for not a single moment's happiness had been hers since her separation from her husband. Too late she learned how well she loved him—but the belief that he was indifferent to her affection wounded her to the soul. She felt that she had been in fault in not sooner relinquishing the society of Clifford as he desired it—yet still she was convinced that the latter had been condemned unjustly, and this conviction was strengthened by the obedience of Charles to her desire—for not since that day had he sought her presence.

She was at length aroused from her musings by a low knock at the door, and in another moment Clifford entered and sprang to her side, while he seized her hand and covered it with passionate kisses.

"Ida! my own, beautiful Ida!" he exclaimed, in a tone of impassioned tenderness, "I could be parted from you no longer. Oh, Ida, you little know the love that dwells within my heart if you deem that I could obey your wish. And it was *not* your wish, was it my Ida? Nay, your averted face tells me the sweet truth."

Her face was indeed averted, but it was only to hide the glow of shame that she felt—shame that she had ever thought of as a brother, one so utterly base and unworthy. But as his last words fell upon her ear, she again turned toward him—the bright flush had faded from her cheek, and Clifford started at the sight of that colorless face.

"Charles Clifford!" she said, and her sweet voice was strangely stern, "for your sake I have forsaken the noble husband whom I loved—forsaken him because he did but point out to his thoughtless wife the precipice on whose verge she was treading—forsaken him because he told me the truth, that *you* were what I could not believe, yet what you have now proved yourself to be—a sinful and unprincipled man. Go, Charles, leave me, and revel in the thought that you have forever destroyed the happiness of a sister." And as she ceased, overcome by her feelings, she wept.

Clifford had once really and truly loved the being who sat before him, her beautiful head bowed with despair, and her slight form drooping beneath that burden of hopeless misery. All his better feelings were not quite lost to the voice of conscience, and he was at once touched and awed by her grief. Again approaching he would have taken her hand, but she moved shrinkingly away, while a visible shudder crept over her.

"Ida," he said, "Ida, forgive and listen to me. I have indeed regarded you with unworthy thoughts—but I deemed that you loved me—that for my sake you left your husband's dwelling—"

"Seek not to palliate your fault, Charles Clifford," she interrupted—"I have never loved any but my husband. And even had I been the sinful being you thought me," she added, in a broken tone, "I had no mother to counsel and guide me, and it should have been *your* task to warn me of the gulf I was approaching. And now, leave me. Go—I would be alone."

Her command was obeyed—and when the form of her companion had disappeared, Ida again bowed her head upon her hands and resigned herself wholly to that overwhelming sense of misery. An hour passed, and still she remained thus—but suddenly a brighter expression irradiated her countenance, and hastily rising she equipped herself for a walk, and with a hurried step left the apartment.

A few minutes afterward she stood at the door of that mansion where the days of her wedded life had passed. It was opened by a strange servant, and without heeding the look of inquiry he cast upon her, Ida rushed quickly past him and bent her steps toward

the library, where at this hour she knew she was most likely to find her husband. The door of the apartment was partly open—and looking stealthily in Ida beheld—not Arthur Norton—but his stern, proud mother! Her face was buried in her hands, while her frame shook as if convulsed with some deep, heart-rending grief. Shocked and alarmed at the sight, Ida stole softly toward her, and forgetting for an instant her own peculiar situation, she threw her arms around the drooping form and muttered, "mother!"

Hastily that proud lady raised her head—coldly she unclasped the snowy arms that encircled her, and shrank shudderingly from that embrace as though a serpent had just enfolded her in its loathsome coils, while for an instant her lips moved and then closed tightly together, as though she had the will but not the power to speak.

"Mother—mother look not thus upon me," pleaded the low, sweet tones of Ida, "I know that I have erred—but I repent, oh! *so* bitterly—and I have come home again to bind up the hearts I have heedlessly wounded. Mother, say that you forgive me—and henceforth I will not swerve in the duty I owe to my husband."

"Your husband!" and there was bitter scorn in the mother's voice, "girl—I can neither pardon or forget—and to the words of forgiveness you would fain hear from *his* lips, you will never listen."

"Mother," she replied, in a tone of child-like confidence, "he must, he *will* forgive me. I will tell him all—how I once foolishly deemed him cold, though I am sure now he always loved me—and how very, very sorry I am that I have ever grieved him thus. And I will promise that if he will but forgive me this once I will never more wrong him—I will even be content to seclude myself from all the world, and live for him alone. And if that avails not—though I am certain it will," and a bright, sweet smile crossed her face, "I will kneel to him—I whom they call so proud—I who have never knelt to mortal being—I will kneel to *him*, and think you he will spurn me?"

"And yet, girl, believe me the word you desire will never pass his lips!" How strange and mocking were those tones—and yet they caused not a fear, nor raised a doubt of evil in Ida Norton's bosom.

"Where is he?—lead me to him," were the words that now fell from her lips—"you shall listen to my pleadings, mother, and if there be any love left in his heart he will not turn away from me. And if he does I can but die." Her voice faltered—but the heart of her companion was hardened against her, and she bade Ida follow her, while she felt no remorse for the cruel act she was about to commit, deeming it a meet punishment for the offences of her companion.

Silently they ascended the stairs, and suddenly Mrs. Norton paused at the door of what had once been Ida's sitting-room. And now how wildly throbbed the young wife's heart as she felt that she would soon gaze once more upon the face of her husband! Slowly the door was turned upon its hinges, and Ida entered the apartment that in other days had been her own.

In a darkened corner of the room upon a low couch reclined a well known form—but he did not raise his head nor move as she approached. Surely he slept! Nearer and nearer she drew toward him, till at last

she could look down upon that beloved and familiar countenance. *And still he stirred not!* Suddenly a fearful pain shot through Ida's heart—for as she gazed upon that ashy face, and marked those closed and sunken eyes, the truth dawned upon her spirit, and she felt that she was in the presence of the dead!

With a strange calmness that fair young creature stood there—her eyes riveted upon the corpse of her husband. Once she bent over and pressed her lips upon the pallid brow—and then turning to the stern woman who stood unpityingly beside her, she asked in a low, hollow tone—"how died he?"

"How died he?" repeated the mother, while the deep flush of excitement mantled her cheek, "how died he? His heart was broken. He cherished a serpent and it stung him. The trusting dove brought a mate to its dwelling, but it took to itself wings and

left him alone to pine and die. How died he? Girl, girl—behold *your* work!"

Wild, stinging, cruel as were her words, they were the outpourings of a mother's grief beside the death-couch of her only child, and to the one who in life had deserted him. Scarcely had her accents died away when a deeper pallor overspread the face of her young companion—step by step she sank to the floor, while a dark stream of life-blood oozed slowly from her mouth, crimsoning the snowy garments of the dead, and deluging the carpet beneath her. One thrilling cry—one half-smothered gasp—and all was over! The innocent yet erring wife lay motionless beside the noble and departed husband—and the meeting denied on earth was doubtless accorded them in Heaven.



THE MAN OF PROSE AND MAN OF VERSE;

OR, THE MISFORTUNES OF BENJAMIN BANGS.

BY JACOB JONES.

If there is great difficulty in this world to raise money, there is none in procuring advice. It is not only bestowed in liberal quantities, at all times, and under all circumstances, but it is frequently forced upon you, notwithstanding any diffidence you may evince in receiving it. When I was a mere child—scarce emancipated from bibs and buckles—I remember hearing “a friend of the family” ask my father what he intended doing with “*that boy*”—at the same time pointing his long, bony fingers to me. Firmly believing that I had committed some forgotten sin, and was about to reap its fruits at the hands of my affectionate parent, I could do no less than put my finger in my mouth, and, in order to anticipate coming events, indulge in a loud, long, spasmodic bawl. But I was mistaken; and before I was led out of the room I heard the “friend” say, in answer to an objection from my mother—“don’t think of it for a moment, sir. Setting young men up in business is just like setting up ten pins—they are sure to be knocked down, sir. Take *my* advice, sir. Give him a first rate education, and then let him shift for himself. Stuff him with Greek—soak him with Latin—edge in philosophy, chemistry, mathematics, the use of the globes, and all these sort of things, wherever you can find or make room. That’s all Benjamin wants to get along with in this world. For you know, Mr. Bangs, that a good education is a fortune in itself.”

Our destiny is often shaped by the merest trifle. This little conversation settled my fate. I received the best education that the best schools and the best teachers could give. But what does it all amount to? I can think Greek—speak Latin—talk French—walk Spanish—and gesticulate in German. I can write an

epic poem, a five act tragedy, or a course of scientific lectures, in a single evening; and can furnish a leading article for the newspapers, on any imaginable or unimaginable subject, at a long notice, short notice, or no notice at all. But, as I said before, what does it all amount to? Here am I, Benjamin Bangs, after twenty years’ buffetings with this heartless world, out at elbows and out of doors—a seedy, shrunken, ball-headed, long legged, spectacled specimen of genius in rags—a walking lexicon encased in a coat that once, alas! was black. The only thing I ever succeeded in was in contracting debts. A fact—upon my *credit*! It is true that I have embarked in speculations that promised great personal advantage—have published my own effusions on my own account—have become the inmate of divers boarding houses—and have *figured* on the books of tailors and hatters, reckless of the consequences of pay day. These speculations, however, were not always unfortunate—for I sometimes *cleared myself*!

Folks talk of learning being better than riches. This may be so. But give me a modern built, modern furnished house—choice food in the larder, the best of servants in the garret, and blooded horses in the stable. Give me, while in the giving mood, a respectable amount of dividend paying stocks—a fair share of bonds and mortgages—a reasonable allowance of ground rents—and a comfortable credit at some specie liquidating bank—and I would willingly be as ignorant as a Hottentot—half man, half animal, and wholly vegetable. Eating, drinking, sleeping—growing to aldermanic rotundity—and with aspirations bounded by soups, salads, and suppers.

If my father had endeavored to make an impres-

either on my mind or body, every time he caught me with book or paper in hand; if, instead of sending me to college, he had mounted me on a high stool in some counting-house, or had apprenticed me to a tailor, tinker or trader, I might now have been a loving husband, a doating father, and—and—(dream often indulged in!)—a *tax payer*! Instead of no means and extensive prospects, consuming the midnight oil (when I can get it!) with a full head and empty stomach, I might have had a house and a home; a rosy, comely wife, and at least six blooming sons and daughters!

There's Higgins, of the firm of Higgins, Hoopes & Co., the wealthiest dry goods merchants in the city. Tom and I were schoolmates together—sat on the same bench—eat off the same apple—and received our daily flagellations from the same birch. He was the biggest booby in the whole school, and believes to this day that the President of the United States is elected by the councils of Philadelphia. Just see how he has got along. Whilst I have been making verses, he has been making money; whilst I have been cudgeling my brain for ideas he has been adding house to house, and lot to lot, and bank stock to bank stock. He is now a President of an Insurance Company—a Director in a Bank—and his word is said to be as good as his bond, and his bond will always command a premium even when the money market is quoted as "tight" and "tottering." And yet he is the same Tom Higgins that I wrote school compositions for thirty years ago; the same Tom Higgins who persisted in spelling bread without the *a*; the same Tom Higgins that was "kept in" day after day to sniffle over lessons that he would not for he could not learn.

In our younger days, before I had run to seed, and Tom had sprouted into a capitalist, we frequently met in society. Papas and mammas seem to know intuitively what sort of stuff it requires for a successful man of business; but as my leaven was not of a *rising* kind, I never received much encouragement. Tom, on the other hand, was a vast favorite with them, although no apparent propitiatory efforts were taken on his part. His steady, plodding looks, and ways, and cold, business twinkle of his eyes, spoke volumes—of bank notes—in his favor, which enabled him not only to knock at the doors of their hearts, but to walk in and hang up his hat there.

Ah! why do I talk of my younger days? It was then I knew Laura Wyndham. Knew her? Tame word! Doated upon her—loved her—the one all engrossing object of my idolatrous devotion! We are all lunatics, and therefore all blind, when we think, let alone speak, of our "first love," with all its soul-moving, heart-melting reminiscences. But Laura *was* the incarnation—the very embodiment—of all that was lovely and loveable. Tall—yet not too tall—hair, black as the raven's wing—eyes, large, dark, lustrous ones, darting lightning or love—form, that looked as if it had leaped from the mould of the brightest goddess that ever set Greeks and Trojans at loggerheads.

How often have I stood by the pump, in front of her father's house, the dreariest winter evenings,

gazing at the room she occupied, covered with the falling flakes of snow, and unconscious of the cold and cutting wind that howled and swept through the streets. I knew *her* room; and I would gaze and gaze until my eyes fairly started from their sockets to accomplish what no one has yet succeeded in—that of seeing through wooden shutters. Romeo desired to be transformed into a glove. Although it may be there is "nothing like leather," I would have gladly compromised for a window shutter.

I loved, and thought I was beloved. It is true she had never made a confession; but there are, at a moderate calculation, a thousand different ways of ascertaining the temperature of a woman's heart without falling on your knees and popping the question plainly, plumply and unmistakeably. My esteem she sought to win; my society afforded her a pleasure she could not conceal; and my opinions moulded her tastes and often influenced her pursuits.

Things remained thus for a twelvemonth. I lived only in her presence. Fool that I was! Instead of worshipping at the shrine, and a welcome worshipper at that, I must go and consult the charming divinity—make a tender of my heart and hand!

The avowal was heard unmoved. She trembled a little at first; but it was not the tremble of anger surprise, or love. She held her head down for a moment, and the darkest and glossiest of curls—(she always wore front curls)—shaded her lovely countenance. Looking up again, with a cold, calm smile, she observed—

"To say, Mr. Bangs, that I am insensible to your merits, would be to practice a deception that I believe myself superior to. But have you thought well of this matter?"

"I have thought of nothing else, Laura."

"I will be frank with you, Mr. Bangs. I have been accustomed to what is termed the luxuries of refined life, and am, therefore, not insensible of the merits of well furnished apartments—a good table—an easy carriage—to say nothing of a *carte blanche* upon such trades people as fancy or caprice may direct me to. What some call luxuries, have now become to me the necessities of life."

"Well, Laura."

"Well, Mr. Bangs, if I should marry any one, I would make a sufficient sacrifice in leaving such a home as I have, without being compelled to feel the loss of what would affect my personal happiness and social position. Don't think me impertinent, Mr. Bangs, but if I should consent to become your wife, what means have you to support me in the same style in which you now find me living?—for I know you have too much spirit to think of living upon the begrudged charity of a father-in-law."

Here was a perfect extinguisher of all my dearly cherished hopes. If Laura had consented to become mine on the condition that I would loan her twenty dollars, she would have still been beyond my reach.

I stammered forth something about congenial souls—gold—dress—and a cottage. Laura shook her head.

"I thought over all this before I saw you this evening, Mr. Bangs; and am glad that your explanations

have left no room for regret. The fruits of poverty and poetry are certainly none of the sweetest."

"But hear me, Laura, before you decide. It is true that I am poor now; but who knows what is in store for me? I am now writing for a political newspaper. My articles are read—my services prized—and as soon as the election is over, I am certain of getting an office."

"A printing office, probably, Mr. Bangs. No, no. My mind is made up. Mr. Higgins called this morning——"

"And he proposed to you?"

"He did."

"You accepted him?"

"I did."

"*Tom Higgins!* To be cut out by the greatest boob—oh! ah! Well, I never——"

"Can be my husband, you mean to say. That's very true, Mr. Bangs; but I hope that will not prevent you from being one of Mr. and Mrs. Higgins' most welcome guests."

They were married the following week; but as Tom never joined in the invitation, extended to me by his wife, I have yet to make the first call.

The last time I saw Laura, she was sitting in a stall of some fancy fair. Her avoirdupois could not have been less than one hundred and eighty—but this only filled my heart the more with unavailing regrets; the more painful because unavailing.

